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FEBRUARY 2019
VOL 24 ISSUE 9

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



No ICE surprise

THE news that the number of exhibitors booked in for this month's ICE London has topped 600 for the first time hardly comes as a big surprise.

The event has been growing continuously over recent years, so much so that it now threatens to outgrow the huge ExCeL exhibition complex (this year it will occupy 38 of the venue's 44 halls).

However, perhaps the most startling statistic released recently by organiser Clarion Gaming is the fact that the show has more than doubled in size over the last seven years (from 22,500sq.m in 2012 to 45,500sq.m in 2019).

This growth can only be described as phenomenal - that's a chronically overused word, but not in this case. The expansion of ICE has thoroughly justified Clarion's strategy of expanding the verticals.

Sometimes when you try to cover all the bases you end up spreading yourself too thinly, becoming the proverbial "jack of all trades and master of none." That does not apply to ICE London because each vertical has been carefully enhanced and afforded due respect and attention.

The result, as I have said many times before, is the greatest gaming show on earth.

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Former Nevada Governor joins MGM...

MGM Resorts International has appointed former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval as president of global gaming development.

Sandoval will drive MGM Resorts' global expansion efforts, most importantly in Japan, and focus on state public policy efforts around sports gaming, while solidifying the company's leadership in the growing sports betting market.

MGM Resorts president Bill Hornbuckle will now lead global casino marketing and



be responsible for leveraging the company's worldwide assets and reputation to drive revenue growth. Hornbuckle's marketing focus will also help drive the company's overall growth in Macau.

"Few leaders are as widely respected, accomplished and knowledgeable as Brian Sandoval and we couldn't be more excited to have him as part of the MGM family," said MGM Resorts chairman and CEO Jim Murren. "He brings an unparalleled level of skill, leadership and experience to the company and we will benefit greatly from his in-depth expertise in gaming, public policy and economic development."

"As I return to the private sector for the first time in over 20 years, finding the right professional opportunity to best suit my experience was important to me," said Sandoval. "MGM Resorts is a global leader and I look forward to joining the team led by Jim Murren, someone who I greatly respect."

...as MGM Resorts adds to board

MGM Resorts International has appointed Keith A Meister to the board of directors.

With this appointment, the board has been expanded from 12 to 13 directors. Meister is managing partner and chief investment officer of Corvex Management, which owns approximately three per cent of MGM's outstanding shares.

Meister has extensive boardroom experience and previously served as a director on the boards of Yum! Brands, The Williams Companies, ADT Corporation, Ralcorp

Holdings, Motorola and American Casino and Entertainment Properties, among others.

Jim Murren, chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts, said: "We are pleased to invite Keith onto the board as our newest independent director. As a significant shareholder in our company, we have been engaged in constructive dialogue over the last several months and are aligned on our strategy to increase free cash flow, continue to pursue an asset light model, drive margin improvement and position the company for long-term future growth."

Wynn wins Malaysian court case

A MALAYSIAN judge last month ruled in favour of Wynn Macau in a case against a fund manager who owed the casino millions of dollars.

The company's lawyer said that this was the first time a casino has been allowed to recover dues in the country.

Wagering or gaming contracts are not

recognised in Malaysia, which means casinos do not have legal recourse for the gambling dues owed to them by their clients.

But in the Wynn case against the Malaysian fund manager, the casino's lawyers said they weren't seeking dues from a wagering contract but from a credit agreement that the Malaysian had failed to honour.



Major changes for Genting Poker Series

GENTING UK - one of the UK's leading casino groups - has announced the dates for the 2019 Genting Poker Series.

In 2019 there will be major changes to the tournaments, that are all designed to enhance the players' poker experience. Now entering its eighth year, the Genting Poker Series will feature 17 events across the country, including 13 mini events and four main events, which will be open to players of all abilities and no qualification is required.

The main events will be held at Resorts World Birmingham, Luton, Liverpool Queen Square and Edinburgh Fountain Park. There is a guaranteed prize pool of £100,000 at each main event. The mini events, which will be returning to venues that include Westcliff in Essex, Newcastle and Reading, will see players compete for a guaranteed prize pool of £35,000 and nine Genting Poker Series main event seats.

In response to player feedback, Genting UK has introduced a button ante structure across all the events in 2019. When a button ante is used, the player on the button will pay the ante for the entire table which, as a result, speeds up the play for all involved. The Genting UK Poker Series is the only national UK poker tour to adopt this format.

Vietnam casino first phase ready by year end

THE first phase of a multi-billion US dollar casino resort on Vietnam's central coast is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

As part of the first phase of the Hoiana gaming resort, two towers will provide 270 units of condominium and hotel space. These facilities will be branded as Hoiana Residence and will be sold before completion of the construction, according to junket firm Suncity Group, which is behind the project.





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Ocean Resort to go back on the market?

OCEAN Resort in Atlantic City, US, the former Revel, could be headed back to the market.

In a suit over his removal from Ocean, former HQ2 nightclub manager Joe Morrissey claimed majority owner Bruce Deifik is trying to sell the casino and wants to cut out anyone with ownership interests that could thwart the sale.

Deifik bought the property for \$200m and reopened it in June last year, the same day the Hard Rock Atlantic City opened. Ocean has ranked last in Atlantic City gaming revenue in four out of the first five months since its opening.

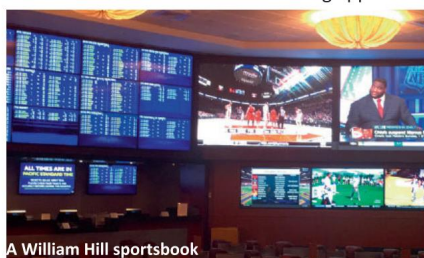
Source: Fantini's Gaming Report



Major Nevada sportsbook step for William Hill

INTERNATIONAL sportsbook operator William Hill has taken a major step in its Nevada growth strategy, winning unanimous recommendations of approval for licensing at seven properties at both ends of the state.

In three separate actions, the state Gaming Control Board recommended licensing approval



A William Hill sportsbook

for race and sportsbooks at Jerry's Nugget in North Las Vegas, four properties in Las Vegas and Laughlin under Golden Entertainment and two in Reno and Stateline under Eldorado Resorts.

The approval in the Eldorado licensing included amending orders of registration involving the company's plan to acquire 20 per cent of William Hill US. William Hill already operates sportsbooks at downtown Reno's Eldorado and Stateline's Montbleu properties, but the change in status requires new licensing.

William Hill US CEO Joe Asher said once final approval is granted, the company would manage race and sportsbooks at the Stratosphere, Arizona Charlie's Decatur and Arizona Charlie's Boulder in Las Vegas, as well as Aquarius in Laughlin.

Hard Rock's Hokkaido master plan

HARD Rock International has presented its master plan for Hokkaido in Japan.

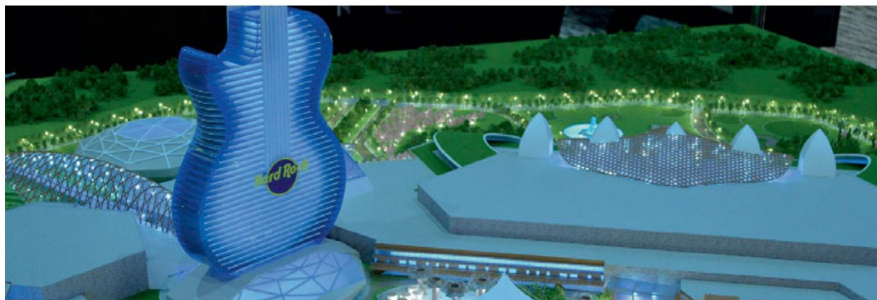
Chairman Jim Allen presented a building model of the proposed resort, which would offer over 1,500 rooms and a host of entertainment attractions.

The Seminole-owned resort, casino and restaurant operator has been aggressive in its pursuit of an IR licence in Hokkaido. Last November, it became a top partner of the J1 Football League team Hokkaido Consadole Sapporo. This was soon followed by an official

sponsorship of an ice sculpture exhibit at the popular Sapporo Snow Festival.

While it seems the Hokkaido IR licence race is in full swing, a heavy cloud hangs over proceedings in the form of the gubernatorial elections this April. Current governor Harumi Takahashi's successor will hold the key as to whether or not the northernmost prefecture of Japan will be one of the first IR licence locations.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief



Circa
RESORT & CASINO

Downtown Vegas casino plans revealed

DEREK Stevens has unveiled the first new casino resort to be built in downtown Las Vegas in decades.

Circa Resort and Casino will open in December 2020 in the space formerly occupied by the Las Vegas Club where Fremont Street meets Main Street.

It will have 777 hotel rooms, a two-storey casino, a range of restaurants, a spa and the longest outdoor bar on Fremont Street, as well as a state-of-the-art parking structure and "transportation hub," a rooftop pool amphitheatre and a multi-level, stadium-style sportsbook.

Stevens said that Circa was conceived and designed as a new attraction inspired by "a grand tradition of Las Vegas-style excitement."

Sands

LAS VEGAS SANDS CORP.

Sands pushing for casinos in New York and Rio

LAS Vegas Sands is pushing for casinos in New York City and Rio de Janeiro, according to reports.

LVS has hired New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's former operations chief, Howard Glaser, as a consultant. He has already set up meetings between LVS officials and New York business leaders, Politico reported.

The company also brought on Kivvit, a lobbying firm with more of Cuomo's former employees. Licences in New York City area can't be issued until 2023, but MGM Resorts is working to shorten that timeline. MGM is buying Empire City slots casino in Yonkers, which would be an applicant for a full casino.

In Brazil, LVS is willing to invest \$10bn into a Rio casino and the city's mayor is asking President-Elect Jair Bolsonaro to allow it, local outlet Valor reported. Mayor Marcello Crivella met with CEO Sheldon Adelson, who told Crivella the casino would double tourism and create 50,000 jobs. Crivella said he'd like Bolsonaro to allow three or four of these casinos throughout Brazil.

Source: Fantini's Gaming Report

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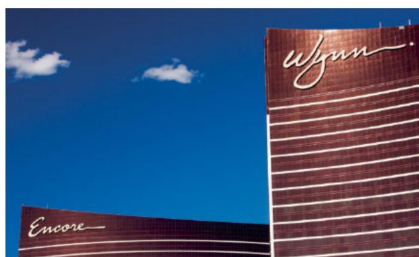
Wynn rings the changes

WYNN Resorts has announced several changes to its senior executive team, including the return of experienced resort executive Marilyn Spiegel as the president of Wynn Las Vegas.

Spiegel previously served as president of the Las Vegas resort from 2010 to 2013. She will replace Maurice Wooden, who has elected to step down as the resort's president at the end of the year.

"I am very pleased that Marilyn will return to lead the team at Wynn Las Vegas and Encore," said Wynn Resorts CEO Matt Maddox. "Our company's legendary service and guest experiences call for someone who truly understands our brand and appreciates what it means to our guests and employees."

In addition, the company has appointed Scott Moore as chief marketing officer. Moore comes to the company with extensive



experience in digital marketing, omni-channel consumer engagement, brand development and accelerating growth.

Also, Michael Weaver has been appointed chief communications officer. Weaver has been with Wynn Resorts since 2011, having served in various leadership positions in marketing, branding, communications and development.

Penn National casino acquisition complete



THE completion of the purchase of Margaritaville Resort Casino in Bossier City, Louisiana, US, has been announced by Penn National Gaming, the major US operator.

The deal is worth \$115m. At the same time Penn National entered into a triple net lease agreement with VICI Properties for the Margaritaville venue. There will be an annual rent of \$23m over 15 years with renewal options.

The Margaritaville location was built in 2013 and has 26,500sq.ft of casino space, 395 rooms, six restaurants and food and beverage outlets. Penn operates 41 locations in 18 jurisdictions and has over 50,000 gaming machines and 1,250 tables.

Golden acquires two Nevada resorts

GOLDEN Entertainment has completed its acquisition of Colorado Belle Gaming and Edgewater Gaming from Marnell Gaming in a cash and stock transaction.

The acquisition adds two casino resorts adjacent to Golden's Aquarius Casino Resort in Laughlin, Nevada, US. Golden Entertainment now owns 10 casino resorts - nine in southern Nevada and one in Maryland. In addition, Golden also operates video gaming devices at nearly 1,000 locations throughout Nevada and Montana, including its wholly-owned Nevada taverns.

Blake L Sartini, chairman and CEO of Golden Entertainment, commented: "The acquisition of these properties complements our market-leading Aquarius Casino Resort in Laughlin and grows our portfolio of wholly-owned southern Nevada casino resorts. Golden is excited to integrate the Colorado Belle and the Edgewater and we welcome their guests and team



members to the Golden family."

The purchase consideration consisted of \$155m cash and approximately 911,000 shares of Golden Entertainment common stock. Golden paid the cash portion of the purchase price using \$10m of cash on hand and \$145m from its existing revolving credit facility.

Prior to the closing, Golden purchased approximately 1.2 million Golden shares in the open market at an average price of \$16.06 under Golden's stock repurchase authorisation.



£2m makeover for London casino

FOLLOWING a £2m makeover, one of London's most prestigious casinos, Mayfair's Palm Beach, is back and better than ever.

In addition to the gaming floor there is a destination restaurant, relaxed grill, cocktail bar and regular music. Stylish and modern with a touch of old school glamour, Palm Beach has one of the largest gaming floors in the capital.

The only casino in the area where membership is not necessary, it is also the only Mayfair casino to offer learn-to-play poker lessons to beginners.

Nevada Gold completes casino sale

NEVADA Gold and Casinos has completed the sale of its Club Fortune Casino at Henderson in the US state of Nevada to Truckee Gaming for \$14.65m.

Nevada Gold and Casinos operates across several US states, including Washington, South Dakota and Nevada. The Club Fortune Casino has 540 slots, seven table games and a poker room.



Legend buys Cambodia company

MACAU Legend is buying a company that owns land in Cambodia that could eventually house an integrated resort.

In a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange the company, an operator of casinos in Macau and Laos, did not mention gaming in relation to the Siem Reap resort.

A Cambodian government official had been quoted last year saying gambling was "not allowed" in Siem Reap, home to the country's UNESCO World Heritage site Angkor Wat.



澳門勵駿創建有限公司
Macau Legend Development Ltd

IGT and Hill in Twin River betting deal

IGT Global Solutions Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of International Game Technology, and William Hill US have introduced sports betting to Twin River Casino Hotel's all-new Sportsbook Bar and Grill.

The new Rhode Island venue features more than 100 HD televisions showing live sporting events and dynamic betting lines. Fans can wager on an expansive selection of pre-game and in-play bets for professional and college sports. The expansion to the new venue represents a continuation of the successful partnership between IGT and William Hill to provide sports betting to the Rhode Island Lottery. IGT provides PlayShot, an end-to-end sports betting platform with touchpoints



through which bets are placed and settled.

William Hill provides odds making services and risk management. IGT and William Hill also provide sports betting at Tiverton Casino Hotel, which began accepting bets on December 3. Twin River Casino Hotel started accepting bets from a temporary space on November 26 prior to the opening of the Sportsbook Bar and Grill.

33 casinos planned for Elysium City

SPAIN'S latest would-be integrated resort developer wants to open 33 casinos.

Last month, US-based company Cora Alpha announced its intention to build a \$3.5bn integrated resort known as Elysium City in Spain's autonomous region of Extremadura. The company has submitted its planning documents along with the required €10m submission fee.

When Cora Alpha first announced the project, the plan called for a master casino licence that allowed the developer to open four casino gaming rooms across the resort. It noted at the time that it could seek authorisation for up to 20 rooms, but has now decided that this is insufficient and has upped the number of desired gaming rooms to 33.

A Cora Alpha spokesperson claimed that the company wasn't interested in creating a new Las Vegas in Extremadura, but was simply making the request as "a matter of bureaucratic efficiency" in that it's better to have the authority to open new gaming rooms as the need arises without having to go back to the authorities.



Another Cyprus satellite

CYPRUS Casinos last month opened a third casino, described as a satellite to the eventual main resort, in Cyprus.

Cyprus Casinos Larnaca (C2 Larnaca) is located at the Larnaca International Airport, near the port city of Larnaca on the south coast of Cyprus.

C2 Larnaca has facilities in two different areas of the airport terminal, according to a company press release, offering 42 slot machines. The first location in the departures area is accessible only to airside passengers, while the second in the arrivals area is accessible to the general public.



Zanella new president at CityCenter



STEVE Zanella is taking over as president and COO at CityCenter, the 16.7sq.ft mixed use complex on the Las Vegas Strip that is connected to the Bellagio resort via a people mover.

CityCenter has condominiums and hotels, plus a shopping mall and the Aria Casino, together constituting the largest privately financed development in the US. It was jointly developed by MGM and Dubai World in 2009 and cost over \$9bn.

Zanella will oversee daily operations of the Aria and of the Vdara Hotel and Spa. He has over

25 years' experience with MGM, most recently serving as president of Core Properties in Las Vegas, overseeing operations at Park MGM, New York-New York Hotel and Casino, Luxor Hotel and Casino, Excalibur Hotel and Casino and Circus Circus.

He began his career with MGM as management associate in 1991, moving through finance, marketing and gaming leadership positions. He has also served as president and COO at MGM Grand Detroit and vice president of slots at Beau Rivage in Mississippi.

Uncontaminated bill of health for Cosmopol

AFTER a clash with the Swedish Lottery Inspectorate over alleged shortcomings in its anti-money laundering procedures, Casino Cosmopol has moved to obtain an ECA Responsible Gambling standard.

The certification came after an independent audit conducted by the Global Gambling Guidance Group that showed the state-owned company acting in line with the latest standards of responsible gambling for licensed land-based casinos.

Casino Cosmopol now joins some major operating names in certification according to the 2018 Responsible Gambling Framework, including Spielbanken Baden-Württemberg in Germany and Casinos Austria.

Ynze Remmers, lead auditor for G4, said: "The audit showed the strong involvement of all employees of Casino Cosmopol in the responsible gambling programme that is exemplary and an important aspect of taking the issue seriously."

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Harrah's partners sports teams

A BIG partnership in US sports and land-based gaming has emerged with the partnership between three New Orleans brands - the Saints American football team, the Pelicans basketball team and gaming giant Harrah's.

Both teams will feature in Harrah's entertainment and gaming presentation with their own branded area on the casino floor that will be designated as an official post-game destination.

The Harrah's downtown location on Canal Street in New Orleans has been a popular destination for visitors for nearly 20 years. The Caesar's Group, of which Harrah's is a subsidiary, has also forged partnerships with the Las Vegas Raiders, the Baltimore Ravens, the Philadelphia 76ers of the NBA and the New Jersey Devils of the NHL.

Harrah's New Orleans is the only land-based casino in the centre of the city and has 115,000sq.ft of gaming, including more than 1,500 slots, 125 table games and 20 tables in its dedicated poker room.



Harrah's New Orleans

Caesars named Official Casino Sponsor for NFL

IN the first-ever national casino sponsorship deal for the US' National Football League, Caesars Entertainment has been named Official Casino Sponsor.

The arrangement will begin with the forthcoming 2019 NFL playoffs. It is a multi-year deal in which Caesars will provide unique experiences for NFL fans by using its casino properties. They will range from celebrity chefs to premier music artists and a wide range of other entertainments.

In return, Caesars has the right to use NFL trademarks in the US as well as in the UK to promote its properties and to market its image at major NFL events, including the Super Bowl and the NFL Draft.

Said Mark Frissora, president and CEO of Caesars Entertainment: "Combining the



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league's 180 million fans with our 55 million Total Rewards loyalty programme members will expose millions of people to the exclusive and year-round opportunities at our properties."

Seven NFL clubs have relationships with Caesars, including the Falcons, Ravens, Bears, Colts, Saints, Raiders and Eagles. Those partnerships, along with the new league deal, are for the casino category only and do not include sports betting, daily fantasy or hotels/resorts.

Gilbane chosen to build Philadelphia casino

LIVE! Casino and Hotel Philadelphia in the US has selected Gilbane Building as general



contractor for its \$700m development.

"Gilbane was a natural fit for this project because the team is so experienced in the hospitality industry and they bring a real understanding of our vision," Joe Weinberg, managing partner of The Cordish Cos, said in a statement.

Gilbane will build the 1.5 million square feet sports, entertainment and casino resort, which will feature a boutique hotel with more than 200 rooms, dining and live entertainment venues and a 2,700-space parking garage. Gilbane will first demolish an existing Holiday Inn and other buildings occupying the site of the future development.

Casino operator staff raise £121,000

MEMBERS of staff from leading casino operator Genting Casino UK have raised more than £121,000



through various running fundraising initiatives over the course of a four-year partnership with the CHIPS Charity.

The CHIPS Charity was founded on behalf of the UK gaming industry in 2001 in order to raise funds to purchase specialised wheelchairs for young people living in the UK with varying disabilities.

The wheelchairs purchased by the charity are donated to children who would otherwise have no way of getting around on their own. Genting Casino UK has had a relationship with the charity since it was founded and since 2015 a team of Genting UK staff have raised an incredible £121,000 for the charity.

To raise vital funds for the charity, members of staff from the casino operator have pushed themselves to the limit by taking part in running events at home and abroad over the course of the last four years.

In 2015, £18,000 was raised by the team at the Royal Parks Half Marathon in London and, in 2016, a sum of £33,000 was raised at the Rock n Roll Las Vegas Marathon and Half Marathon.

In 2017, Genting UK staff travelled to Spain for the Rock n Roll Madrid Marathon and Half Marathon, raising a total of £20,000. They then returned to America for the Rock n Roll San Diego Marathon and Half Marathon where the team raised a staggering £50,000.

Corona Casino opens in Vietnam

THE Corona Casino in Phu Quoc island opened for business last month, becoming the first in Vietnam to admit locals on to the floor under a three-year pilot scheme.

The casino is being managed by Netherlands-based Upfinity Gaming Management, which signed an exclusive management accord in May 2017.

The casino forms part of the Corona Integrated Resort, which includes a Radisson Blue hotel, a Vin Oasis hotel, a Safari and Amusement park, convention centre, theatre and shopping experience.

The casino was designed by Steelman Partners and consists of 18,800sq.m of gaming space with 100 tables and 1,000 electronic gaming machines, three restaurants, two specialty bars and lounges.

The opening and pre-opening was managed by Peter Keijzer, former general manager of Holland Casino in Amsterdam, the biggest in the Netherlands.

Analyst shows confidence in Vegas

THOMAS Allen of Morgan Stanley has lowered targets on Las Vegas Sands and Wynn and raised it on MGM, saying he is confident of Las Vegas but wary of Macau this year.

The Strip rebounded strongly in the fourth quarter and should benefit from strong convention demand this year, particularly in the first three quarters, Allen said.

The number of flights to Las Vegas continues to grow and the city will benefit from the arrival of the NFL Raiders in 2020, additional convention space opening and the Sphere 18,000-seat concert arena being built by LVS and Madison Square Garden, Allen said.

He expects Wynn EBITDA to decline seven per cent, Las Vegas Sands five per cent and MGM four per cent, largely due to his forecast of a two per cent gaming revenue decline in Macau.

Caesars should have upside driven by strong Las Vegas and regional performances this year. The announcement of a new CEO and the

company's integration of the Centaur Gaming racinos in Indiana will have a strong impact on the company, Allen said.

Allen continues to favour MGM, saying it will benefit from Park MGM, the company's 2020 growth plan and stronger Las Vegas performance. Las Vegas Sands remains attractive despite his cautious view on Macau as it continues to attract growing mass-market customers.

Allen expects LVS to win one of Japan's three casino licences, helping to diversify revenues. Wynn will be a risky play this year with the weak Macau gaming market and concerns over concession renewals there.

However, a positive ruling on the company's Massachusetts gaming licence and better-than-expected market share in Macau would drive the stock, Allen said.

Source: Fantini's Gaming Report



Aussie chamber in Macau

THE Australian gaming industry will have direct representation in Macau as a result of the establishment of an Australian Chamber of Commerce in the Chinese gambling capital.

The organisation began as the Macau Business Network of the Australian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and Macau, but now the two-cities chamber has divided into separate entities.

AustCham Macau, as it is now known, will have its official launch at an event to be staged on Australia Day, January 26, at the Galaxy Macau's Terrazza restaurant, which interested parties are invited to attend.



New president and officers for AGEM

THE Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers has elected new officers under the leadership of a new president - Luke Orchard, a senior vice president at IGT.

Previously an AGEM vice president, Orchard replaces JCM's Tom Nieman for a two-year term, while Nieman moves to the treasurer position for a one-year term.

One-year terms were also approved for vice president Thomas Jingoli (Konami Gaming), vice president David Lucchese (Everi), vice



Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers

president Bob Parente (Scientific Games), vice president Eric Fisher (Crane Payment Innovations), secretary Mark Dunn (Aristocrat) and general counsel Daron Dorsey (Ainsworth Game Technology).

Former casino chief jailed in South Korea

IN South Korea, the former head of state-run casino operator Kangwon Land has been sentenced to three years in prison for conducting illicit hiring practices.

Choi Hung-jib, former CEO of Kangwon Land, was indicted for instructing his officials to favour candidates with ties to high-profile politicians during the hiring process between 2011 and 2014.

Last year, two lawmakers from the main opposition party in South Korea were

also indicted in connection to the job placement scandal.

Representatives Kweon Seong-dong and Yeom Dong-yeol were charged with abuse of power and business interference but were not detained.

Choi Hung-jib was immediately remanded in custody following the court ruling, which took place at the Chuncheon District Court.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief

Uganda President orders betting freeze

THE President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, has ordered the government to suspend the issue or renewal of licences for companies offering betting, including sports betting.

A directive "has been received and will be implemented," explained Finance Minister David Bahati last month. The directive appears to be motivated by Museveni's belief that "betting companies are distracting young people from work," according to the minister.

In May 2017, the Ugandan government imposed restrictive measures on the use of betting games to limit access for minors, in addition to increasing taxes on the companies in the sector.

Uganda has the highest percentage of population under 30 years of age in the world, with 77 per cent in that age group, a figure that contrasts with youth unemployment rate in the country - at 2.91 per cent in 2017.

Samuel Mutekanga of Betway, one of the most important sports betting companies in the country, said the decision was "a surprise," as well as "a commotion that threatens our investment."





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Tampa Bay Rays heading for Vegas?

WITH National Hockey League and National Football League teams in the fold, Las Vegas is being speculated as possibly landing the Tampa Bay Rays of Major League Baseball.

There is speculation that Caesars' Rio in Las Vegas could serve as the site for an MLB stadium which the Rays could occupy, *Sunshine State News* reported. Tampa Bay is making noises about moving the team if it doesn't get a new stadium and Las Vegas and Portland, Oregon, are likely suitors, the publication said.

The Rio would have location going for it with 100 acres along Flamingo Road near the Interstate 15 interchange and just a mile from the Strip. The Rays' Tampa stadium lease in Tampa, Florida, ends in 2027, though the team could leave earlier.

Source: Fantini's Gaming Report

Blow to Hokkaido casino prospects

HARUMI Takahashi (pictured) has confirmed that she will be stepping down as governor of Hokkaido Prefecture in Japan next spring, a serious blow to prospects for a local IR bid.

Takahashi announced that she will not be running for a fifth term, but will instead stand as a ruling party candidate in next July's House of Councillors election.

Her departure means that there will be a new governor in Sapporo next spring. Most likely it will be a contest between a conservative ruling party-backed candidate and a united opposition candidate, though no one has yet declared.

Pro-IR forces are thus losing the power of incumbency in a prefecture in which opposition parties have historically performed better in elections than they do at the national level.

Next spring the unified local elections will include both the gubernatorial race and the assembly elections. Conservative forces will likely need to win both contests for the IR plans to go forward.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief

Cosmopol appeals against fine

SWEDEN'S Casino Cosmopol has lodged an appeal against the country's Lottery Inspectorate for its decision to fine the casino for shortcomings in its anti-money laundering work.

The casino argues that the inspectorate cannot decide on a penalty fee as there is no clear regulation and guidance. The inspectorate sent a message on November 27 regarding the casino's efforts to counter money laundering and condemned it to a penalty of SEK8m (€778,000) for its failings.

Casino Cosmopol shortly afterwards submitted a plan of action outlining strong efforts in meeting shortcomings and also filed an appeal against the decision to fine it.

In a statement, the casino said that "in this situation it is not proportional to decide on a penalty. Sanction charges shall only be used unless other methods are sufficient. In the absence of clear regulations and guidance from the Lottery Inspectorate, it cannot be considered correct to decide on a penalty fee."



Genting and Wynn court battle moved

THE court battle between Genting Las Vegas and Wynn Resorts over claims of copycat building design has been moved to January 29, local media reports.

US District Court Judge Gloria Navarro directed the attorneys for Wynn Resorts and Resorts World to attend a hearing January 29 in Las Vegas to present arguments on how Resorts World Las Vegas could produce a property design that doesn't resemble Wynn and Encore.

In December, Wynn filed a five-count trademark infringement and unfair competition lawsuit against Okada.



Las Vegas property, requesting an injunction that would temporarily halt construction of the property.

Wynn pointed out Genting's similar bronze curved glass design in its building concepts, claiming damages.

However, in January, Genting defended itself, saying that Wynn's assumption was "speculative extrapolation" given the project was in the early stages of construction.

"Genting (Resorts World's parent company) remains confident that once all of the relevant facts are presented the company will defeat Wynn's baseless claims," Michael Levoff, senior vice president of public affairs and development for Genting, said in an emailed statement to the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.

Warrant issued for Okada's arrest

A COURT in Parañaque in the Philippines has issued an arrest warrant for Universal Entertainment founder Kazuo Okada in connection with charges that he embezzled more than \$3m from his own company.

The arrest warrant follows about a month after the Philippine Department of Justice recommended charges against Okada.

It has been nearly a year since Okada was ousted from his company amid accusations of financial improprieties. An arrest warrant was also issued for Takahiro Usui, the former president and COO of Okada Manila, who is

accused of being Okada's co-conspirator.

Both Okada and Usui have consistently maintained their innocence, with Okada arguing publicly that the current Universal Entertainment leadership has made false charges against him in order to seize control of the company.

Prosecutors in both the Philippines and Hong Kong had wavered for most of last year on whether or not to press charges against Okada, apparently unsure if it was a criminal case or simply an internal corporate feud.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief





Italy raises tax on gambling

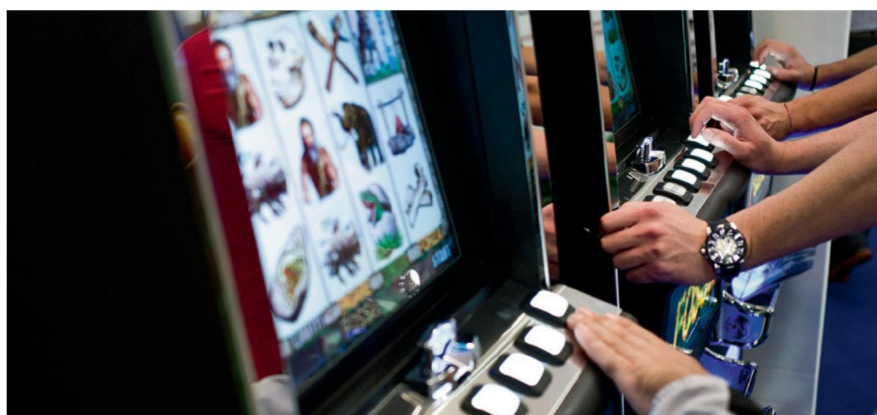
MORE tax on slot machines, video lottery terminals, online gambling and betting has been announced in the 2019 Italian Budget.

The Prelievo erariale unico, or single tax levy for gaming machines in Italy, applied to both AWP's and VLTs, has been increased by 1.25 per cent.

However, there is a downwards adjustment in the minimum payout levels for each category, taking AWP's down one point to 69 per cent and VLTs down half a point to 84.5 per cent.

The Budget now goes to the Italian Parliament for ratification. There is a contingency that permits an 18-month delay in the imposition of the new payout percentage levels in order to cater for technical operations for adapting the winning payout percentage. The changes will have to be in place by June, 2020.

On betting, the tax rises to 20 per cent and for online games to 24 per cent. According to the Italian publication *Gioco News*, the calculations for online skill games result in a 25 per cent tax.



US casino revenue still growing

ANOTHER strong month from Nevada and the Las Vegas Strip helped grow gaming revenues 4.98 per cent to \$3.354bn in November, according to Fantini's National Revenue Report.

Outside of Nevada, regional casinos grew 4.41 per cent to \$2.387bn thanks to new casinos like MGM Springfield in Massachusetts,

Churchill Downs' Derby City Gaming in Kentucky, and Hard Rock and Ocean in New Jersey.

Same-store regional revenues grew 0.42 per cent. Penn National once again dominated regional casino revenue following its merger with Pinnacle.



Miller named AGA president and CEO

THE American Gaming Association's board of directors has named Bill Miller as its president and CEO.

Miller assumed his new role on January 14. He was formerly the senior vice president at the Business Roundtable, the association of chief executive officers of US corporations, and has been responsible for overseeing the association's outreach to Capitol Hill and the Administration for the past six and a half years.

In a statement, the AGA said: "We were fortunate during this process to have dedicated leaders in Stacy Papadopoulos and Sara Slane to continue the association's success and progress. With their guidance and the dedication of the AGA staff, the association hasn't skipped a beat while the search committee vetted many qualified candidates for the position.

"Bill is excited to roll up his sleeves and get to work on behalf of AGA's diverse membership and looks forward to meeting you all. Thank you for your continued support during this transitional time for the AGA."

Albania bans casinos

A CASINO ban in Albania took effect on January 1.

The prohibition of casinos approved by the Albanian authorities came about as a result of the massive expansion of the industry in the small Balkan country.

The government also announced the opening of rehabilitation centres for people adversely affected by gambling.

North Korea calls casino halt

KIM Jong-un, the leader of North Korea, has halted all major casino projects in the country following pressure from China.

He has ordered a halt to construction of a hotel in Sinuiju, near the Chinese border, despite the development already standing 20 storeys high. It had been planned to incorporate a casino into the finished project.

"The main reason for halting the casino project is that it has been deemed that the project is a major hindrance to obtaining investment from other countries, particularly China," stated Radio Free Asia.

Macau GGR up in 2018

GROSS gambling revenue in Macau rose 14 per cent in 2018, with December topping consensus forecasts with a gain of 16.6 per cent.

According to figures from the Gambling Inspection and Coordination Bureau, GGR for December came in at MOP26.5bn (\$3.3bn), with revenue for the full year topping out at MOP302.85bn (\$37.57bn), compared to MOP265.74bn in the previous year.

Bernstein Research said both VIP and mass had benefited from events held during what has been a weaker month for the past two years, including several days of Jay Chou's The Invincible Concert Tour held at The Venetian.

However, the analysts cautioned that the slowdown in China's economy signalled headwinds for Macau going into 2019. It expects January GGR to be in a range of minus two to plus two per cent.

Union Gaming analyst Grant Govertsen said the year had ended broadly in line with his expectations, though with a better mix of mass versus VIP.

"As we look into 1Q19, and contemplate the timing of Chinese New Year, we would not be surprised if January was flattish and February was up in the mid/high single digits. For the whole of 1Q19 we are forecasting GGR up four



per cent, followed by mid-single digits for the balance of the year.

"While the macro remains uncertain, Macau has remained resilient, particularly with respect to the mass market segment. It is for that reason that we view Sands China and Galaxy as the best ways to play Macau for the foreseeable future."

Govertsen also noted that the surging visitor numbers to Macau as a result of the opening of the Hong Kong-Macau-Zhuhai bridge were not translating into increased foot traffic to the casinos as yet. Instead, the bridge is largely being used as a way to shuttle people between Hong Kong and Zhuhai via Macau. He adds that dynamic is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief

GamCare to unveil new standard at ICE

GAMCARE, the provider of information, advice and support for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling, will be using this year's ICE London as a platform to unveil its Safer Gambling Standard.



The new kite mark sets out to recognise gambling operators who meet and go beyond the requirements of gambling industry codes of practice and comprises a group of 12 sets of

principles for social responsibility across online, land-based and B2C operations.

Expanding on GamCare's decision to conduct the official launch at the world's largest gaming technology event, development director Mike Kenward (pictured) explained: "ICE London is the heart of the industry and the place where the conversation around consumer protection and customer welfare should be happening."

"We will be announcing the full roll-out of our new standard in the Consumer Protection Zone where operators should be heading in order to focus on protecting their customers and sustaining their businesses."

Amendments proposed for DC sports betting bill

IN the US, Washington DC Council has proposed amendments to its recently passed sports betting bill.

The amendments would double the licensing fees to \$500,000 for the four designated sports venues and to \$100,000 for licensing venues outside of the two-block exclusivity zones of those venues. Discounts to the licensing fees would be offered to applicants that establish joint ventures with certified local businesses.

Another bill would exempt sports betting from the required procurement process to get them up and running this year. The emergency



bill would let the DC Lottery obtain technology platforms, lottery gaming systems and related services, according to a council memo.

It may allow the council to bypass a bidding process on the licence to allow current lottery operator Intralot to move forward, according to Legal Sports Report.

Source: Fantini's Gaming Report



NagaWorld, Cambodia

150 casino licences now in Cambodia

CAMBODIA'S casino market expanded dramatically in 2018 due to the rapid development of the Sihanoukville region's gaming sector.

New figures from Cambodia's Ministry of Economy and Finance show there were 150 active casino licences at the end of 2018, up from just 98 at the end of 2017. Cambodia's Preah Sihanouk province alone had 88 active casino licences at the end of last year.

The government has yet to issue specifics on how much revenue it reaped from the gaming industry in 2018. But Ros Phirun, deputy director of the General Department of Financial Industry, told the *Phnom Penh Post* that the ministry had previously forecast gaming tax and fee revenue of \$56m. That would be more than twice the sum the government collected in 2014.

FOBTs stake law seals deal

THE UK government has formally enacted the legislation to reduce the stakes on fixed odds betting terminals (Category B2) to £2.

The move will trigger a section in the deal for GVC Holdings to purchase the Ladbrokes Coral Group that forms part of the consideration. The new law comes into force 10 days after enactment and it means that a "contingent value right" built into the deal is now dropped to zero pence, effectively canceling them.

GVC Holdings is a sports betting and gaming group operating online and in the retail sector. Its brands include bwin, Coral, Crystalbet, Eurobet, Ladbrokes and Sportingbet, plus Foxy Bingo, Gala, Gioco Digital and partypoker. It bought Ladbrokes Coral in March 2018 and as a result is the UK's largest high street bookmaker with over 3,500 betting shops.



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SG Gaming in Praesepe deal

SCIENTIFIC Games' UK division, SG Gaming, has agreed to a five-year deal with Praesepe to supply over 700 new gaming products across its Cashino and Beacon Bingo brands.

This will ultimately see over 1,800 SG Gaming terminals across the total estate. The new deal sees the existing partnership with Praesepe, which now spans over a decade, strengthened even further with the roll-out of 581 of SG's Equinox 2.7 terminals.

In addition, SG will add to the existing suite of T8 terminals currently in operation. The roll-out is expected to be completed by the end of Q1 2019 and is an example of the commitment and investment from SG Gaming to both Praesepe and the arcade and bingo sectors as a whole.

Praesepe's investment will enable it to benefit from the on-terminal promotional functionality and intelligent multigame menus that SG Gaming's advanced, server-based platform offers.

This range of functionality will allow Praesepe to tailor its offerings, customise the players' experience and integrate SG Gaming product into its existing systems. As part of the agreement, the terminals will also be enabled to run Gambling Business Group approved TITO and BACTA Dataport functionalities.

Andy Tipple, head of product for Praesepe, said: "The introduction of the new Equinox terminals is an exciting development for Praesepe and will help us elevate our gaming offer to the next level. We're confident that players across our Cashino and Beacon Bingo venues will be thrilled by these new additions and the entertaining games available."

"Scientific Games' continued hardware innovation and access to an unrivalled content offering has always impressed and proved popular with our players. As well as the new Equinox terminal, we are thrilled to expand on the number of ever popular T8 terminals across



the business and look forward to working closer with the SG Gaming team, as we develop our retail gaming experience."

Simon Johnson, group commercial director of SG Gaming UK, said: "We're delighted that Praesepe has chosen to strengthen this partnership further with the addition of our premium products and popular terminals across its estate. The agreement enables both Praesepe and its customers to benefit from our leading gaming content and the immersive gaming experience that our Equinox terminals provide."

"We believe that this comprehensive deal will help to drive cashbox performance and provide Praesepe with an innovative new set of tools to offer their players. Backed by the wider Scientific Games Group, SG Gaming continues to invest and grow its product and technology offer across the arcade sector. This significant deal will enable both our teams to continue to work closely together to ensure that Praesepe has the best and most engaging gaming offer throughout their arcade venues across the country."

Zitro's Link King enters Argentina

LINK King, Zitro's flagship product in the Bryke video slots range, is now installed in the prestigious Bingo Golden Jack hall in Quilmes, Argentina.

It is also soon to be installed in the bingo hall of the same group in Solano. Jessica Cavanna (pictured), marketing manager of Bingo Golden Jack, said: "I am very pleasantly surprised with the progress of Zitro in recent years."

"For us, the operator, it is important to have a variety of products and suppliers to diversify the options and offer our players the best experiences. Link King provides unique emotions, with an impeccable presentation, which our clients have immediately welcomed."

Sebastian Salat, CEO of Zitro, added: "Link King is triumphing wherever we've installed it,



also in Argentina. The proven performance of our product, combined with the deep range of games for different player profiles, make Zitro's Bryke video slots an extremely interesting alternative for operators."

Big Vietnam project for Signs4U

DUTCH sign-maker Signs4U has been given a pat on the back by the head of one of the Far East's biggest and most impressive new casino resort locations.

The company has now completed the biggest project in its 20-year history, the Corona Resort and Casino on the border between Vietnam and Cambodia.

The 1,000-slot 100-table resort is a US\$2bn investment and the 140 signs with 290 integrated monitors was a vital part of its casino floor. Signs4U spent most of 2018 designing, building and installing the work that included no fewer than six huge 5m signs with integrated LED balls and LED displays and monitors.

From start to finish the project took the company six months and also included 750 slot bases built by Italy's StylGame, for whom Signs4U is a distributor. The bases included integrated LED angled spacers and endcaps for each bank. The work was completed by a Signs4U team working on site together with installation teams from Jade Gaming and RGB Games.

Peter Keijzer, managing director of the Corona Casino, said: "We were very impressed with the way in which Signs4U produced and installed the entire project in the set timeframe." He added: "They worked seamlessly with the Steelman architects team to ensure that the design of the signage fitted precisely with the theme of the casino interior."

Martin Spies, CEO at Signs4U, said: "It was our biggest project to date and we can now illustrate to the casino world our ability to handle any project. We have during the year completed a number of significant projects across Europe, combining both overhead signs and fillers between machines."

"We have been able to expand our multi-media system into almost all of the major locations in the Netherlands and helped operators to get important marketing messages out on the location floor."

Interblock appoints Andrea McCurry

INTERBLOCK, a leading electronic table gaming manufacturer, has appointed Andrea McCurry as product manager.

In her role, McCurry will be conducting product requirements and transitional support between R&D and operations, which will include various project management tasks and the managing of beta launches.

She has held key roles in opening several California Native American casinos as well as several slot, table management and director level positions in Native American casinos.

Interblock CEO John Connelly said: "We are very excited to welcome Andrea to the team. Her industry knowledge and track record will make her a great asset to Interblock."

AGS to acquire Integrity Gaming

AGS has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire all issued and outstanding common shares of Integrity Gaming for a cash payment of CA\$0.46 per share or a total transaction value of US\$49m.

The transaction is expected to be funded with cash on the balance sheet and to close in the first half of 2019, subject to approval by Integrity's shareholders, receipt of applicable regulatory, court and third-party approvals and other customary closing conditions.

In fiscal 2017, Integrity generated revenue of approximately US\$16m and pre-synergy EBITDA of approximately US\$9m. As a result of revenue optimisation and other efficiencies, the company expects that adjusted EBITDA will grow at approximately 15 per cent on an annualised and non-GAAP basis, beginning in fiscal 2019.

AGS' senior vice president of slot products, Andrew Burke, said: "The Integrity team has built a strong business, with an installed base of more than 2,700 Class III and Class II games in



Oklahoma and Texas, partnering with some of the largest tribal gaming operators in the US."

Integrity's interim CEO, Robert Miodunski, said: "We strongly believe this is a good transaction for our company and that our customers will benefit from AGS' deep roots in Oklahoma and its proven ability to successfully manage a large footprint of leased games to drive strong performance for gaming operators."

Integrity owns slot machines manufactured by various slot suppliers, including AGS, in approximately 30 tribal casinos in Oklahoma and Texas and also offers direct sales of other gaming products and supplies.



Merkur enters Suriname market

FOR the first time in 18 months the Riviera Casino Club at Paramaribo, Suriname, is making a substantial injection of new machines - and it has chosen Merkur Gaming's Avantgarde Trio for the bulk of it.

The Riviera, located in the Marriott Hotel in the city, which is the capital of the country, is run by managing director Serkan Arslan and slots manager Ernest Villiers.

Merkur technician Raul Simon conducted the installation of the new machines and after only a short time in service they appear to be well received by players.



Table Trac replaces M1 slot system

M1 Gaming of Dayton, Nevada, has contracted with Table Trac to replace its existing online slot system with the CasinoTrac system.

The Nevada Nugget Casino joins the growing number of Nevada casinos that have chosen Table Trac's casino management system.

The Nevada Nugget Casino will feature many of favourite games and will enjoy the enhanced customer service experience that the new state-of-the-art players club provides patrons.

The CasinoTrac system will provide the Nevada Nugget with new ways to win and receive extra rewards.

Chad Hoehne, president of Table Trac, stated: "I am very pleased to be adding the Nevada Nugget Casino to our portfolio of satisfied customers. Our number one goal is to make our system easy to use, easy to train and easy to own, with our full commitment to service and value."

Aristocrat launches TLS games in Washington

ARISTOCRAT has installed its first tribal lottery system games in the US state of Washington at the Tulalip Resort Casino and Quil Ceda Creek Casino.

The new games - Birds of Pay, Buffalo Gold Collection, Wild Lepre'Coins and Wild Panda Gold - are the first games in the state provided by Aristocrat on the TLS platform. The games come to Tulalip and Quil Ceda by means of the Tulalip Tribe of Washington's sponsoring Aristocrat's entrance into the TLS market. That sponsorship allowed the company to sell its cabinets and games in the state. "We are excited for the Tulalip/Aristocrat partnership and what it means to the Washington market. Aristocrat has established solid product performance and will bring a superior library of content for our guests' enjoyment," said Don Hegnes, Tulalip Resort Casino slots director.



Gauselmann gets top place to work award

THE Gauselmann Group has won a Most Coveted Employer Award from the FAZ Institute for Managing, Market and Media Information, a subsidiary of Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

It reports that in times of a shortage of skilled workers, the Gauselmann Group is one of the top 10 per cent of Germany's most sought-after employers. The FAZ analysed five reputational factors - employer performance, economic performance, product and service performance, sustainability performance and management performance - to identify the top employers in the country.



There were 510 companies from 132 different industries awarded this year and the Gauselmann Group took first place in the gambling category and can now use the quality seal of the FAZ.



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KEEP IT EZ

Novomatic hosts Argentine operators

ARGENTINE operators had the chance to see the latest Novomatic range at a Novomatic Experience Event held at the Crystal Bar at Alvear Icon Hotel in Buenos Aires.

The location overlooks the Puerto Madero waterfront in the city and provided a vital backdrop to the exclusive event for operators from all over the country. They were entertained with live music, a DJ, experiential art show and Argentine wines.

A full team from Novomatic's Buenos Aires office was on hand to demonstrate the new games, the multigame mixes and cabinets. The new Voodoo Fortunes games was introduced on the Panthera Curve 1.43 cabinet and connected to the Enchanted Fortunes Linked Jackpot. The Panthera 2.27 was also there with the VIP Lounge Curve 1.43 with new titles including Viking and Dragon.



The guests were also able to meet and talk to the former Argentine footballer and TV personality Oscar Ruggeri. In a prize draw one visitor won an all-inclusive trip to ICE in London. The picture shows Max Bauer, Novomatic's regional CFO Latin America and the Caribbean, with footballer Oscar Ruggeri.

Cognitec solution prevents losses

COGNITEC'S highly specialised face recognition technology has a proven track record in supporting physical security measures by alerting staff in real time about banned persons entering the premises.



The technology also analyses faces to compute anonymous data about people count, age range, gender and people movement in time and space.

The company has supported various large-scale design and implementation efforts at casino sites worldwide that now successfully prevent losses and criminal activities. In addition, the technology alerts casino staff about self-enrolled problem gamblers and very important customers.

"But the software alone won't produce

optimal results," says the company. "Venues are looking for a cohesive, integrated system that combines hardware, software and services and that integrates seamlessly into their existing systems and operations.

"Types of cameras, their positioning and tuning; high-performance server choice; setting up an optimal network infrastructure; configuration of the solution; funding and deploying the system - all these components play an important part.

"Making them work together and supporting their continuous operation and maintenance needs a specialist face recognition company with a proven track record in the gaming and entertainment industry.

"Security may be the top concern for a casino or club when selecting a face recognition system, but a safe environment for all customers and employees, a profitable business and support from the community will provide true rewards for investing in this leading-edge technology."

300 casinos for Win's CMS

WIN Systems has reached an important milestone by exceeding 300 casinos using its Wigos casino management system.

These figures reinforce Win Systems as one of the leading worldwide companies in casino management systems, with an exponential growth in recent years.

The company installed its CMS in 23 new casinos during November and December 2018 and finished the year with more than 50 new casinos and more than 80,000 player positions in total, with presence in 20 countries around the globe.

In parallel, the company also achieved other



important goals, such as its expansion across the US, first installations in strong markets such as Argentina and the Philippines and a relevant route project implemented in Jamaica.

Win Systems installed Wigos for the first time in February 2010, in a casino in Tapachula, Mexico.

SG takes Monopoly through 2025

THE long-term licence agreement that Scientific Games has with toy maker Hasbro for the use of the Monopoly brand and other games, has been extended until the end of 2025, it has been announced.

SG has worked with the Monopoly licence for 20 years and it is highly valued by SG, as the gaming supplier's president and CEO Barry Cottle said. "This new agreement signifies the strength of a great collaboration and celebrates the global endearment of the Monopoly brand as a leading slot brand and the top-selling licensed brand for lottery tickets.

"The agreement grants us the privilege of extending and expanding the scope of the licensing into a wide range of new products and play styles."

Other product names now continuing to be available to SG include Game of Life, Battleship, Yahtzee and Scrabble in the US and Canada.



Executive promotions at Scientific Games

SCIENTIFIC Games has announced three executive promotions to solidify the company's leadership team going into 2019.

Jim Kennedy, currently executive vice president and group chief executive, lottery, will become chairman, lottery and Patrick McHugh, who currently serves as senior vice president global lottery systems, has been appointed the lottery's new executive vice president and group chief executive.

In addition, Jordan Levin has been named the new executive vice president and group chief executive, digital. Levin is currently senior vice president for corporate development, where he led the acquisition and integration of NYX Gaming Group and previously launched and served as president of SG Interactive.

Barry Cottle, Scientific Games' president and CEO, said: "These globally-respected leaders and long-time members of our SG family are the best people to continue our growth trajectory, deliver operational excellence and inspire our employees."



Big US order for Apex Gaming

APEX Gaming has received a significant order from Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort and Harrah's Cherokee Valley River in the US state of North Carolina.

This business relationship began in 2016 when Harrah's was looking for a way to better manage its live gaming tables. "It all began with our search for a cash management solution for our live gaming tables," said Ron Hager, director of table games at Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort.

"JL Drapeau of Apogee Gaming first introduced Apex to us. When he told us that they had a solution for table games, we were all ears. The Apex team was very keen to learn how they could solve our problems. They listened to our problems, offered to find a solution and then worked swiftly and professionally to make further developments to its iDROP to create exactly what we needed. This brought about the iDROPe.

"We issue literally millions of promotional coupons every year. Our customers had to queue and wait at the cages to exchange these. This problem belongs to the past as our customers can now redeem the coupons directly at the live gaming tables."

Apex has now received an order that covers a wide range of its product offering. This includes all three versions of the award-winning jackpot islands - the Big Island, the Round Edition and the Wall Edition. Harrah's Cherokee will be the very

first casino in North America to introduce the Wall Edition together with the Clover Link games.

Players at Harrah's Cherokee can also look forward to many more Apex Player Station electronic roulettes. Individual Pinnacle slots are also included in the order as well as the Pinnacle VIP edition.

Joshua Vaught, director of operations, slots and table games at Harrah's Cherokee Valley River, said: "It's not often that a new supplier makes such a positive impact on our gaming floor. We've seen this with Apex, which has become a must on our casino floor."

"Let me take this opportunity to thank the entire team at Harrah's Cherokee," said Kubilay Özer, Apex's global sales director. "Their business sense, open-mindedness and desire to give their best to ensure the enduring success at Harrah's Cherokee are obvious.

"They quickly recognised the difference we can make and placed full focus on ensuring that Apex becomes a household name to their customers. This order has now firmly placed us on the gaming map in North America.

"I would also like to thank the whole Apogee Team, especially JL Drapeau and Justin Reece, for their dedication and focus and the extraordinary relationship with their customers, ensuring the success of our entry into the North American market."



Yellow Brick Road Casino

OpenBet for three New York casinos

SCIENTIFIC Games has been selected to provide the Oneida Indian Nation's three leading casinos in upstate New York, US, with sports betting through its OpenBet technology.

Oneida is the owner of the award-winning Turning Stone Resort Casino, Yellow Brick Road Casino and Point Place Casino. It will launch its sportsbooks in New York as soon as sports betting is authorised in the state. It will deploy SG Digital's OpenBet, embedded with player-centric technology, dynamic in-house pre-game and data feeds from its recent acquisition of Don Best Sports.

Scientific Games and Oneida will submit the agreement to the National Indian Gaming Commission for review to ensure compliance with applicable laws. It will be among the first NIGC reviews of an Indian tribe's US sports betting agreement.

"Being among the first Indian nations nationally to operate a sportsbook and among the first to offer sports betting in New York represents our commitment to entering this burgeoning market ready for rapid acceleration," said Ray Halbritter, Oneida Indian Nation representative and Nation Enterprises CEO.

"After rigorous assessment of the supplier market, we determined that partnering with Scientific Games and SG Digital will give our players the best sports betting experience starting on day one."



The Harrah's Cherokee and Apex Gaming teams

Gaming company wins national award - twice

AGS, a designer and supplier of electronic gaming machines, table products and interactive solutions for the gaming industry, has won the Best and Brightest Companies to Work For in the US award for 2018.

This is the second year in a row that AGS has won this coveted distinction. AGS also won Atlanta's 2018 and 2017 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For, a testament to the company's employee-focused culture at its R&D centres in the Atlanta, Georgia, metro area.

AGS was selected by an independent research firm following a confidential survey of all US



employees that evaluated key measures in various categories including diversity and inclusion, work-life balance, community initiatives and strategic company performance.

New titles from Aruze Gaming

ARUZE Gaming America has launched two new games for its Cube-X Innovator cabinet in the Class III sector of the North American market.

Thunder Deep Violet and Thunder Wild Indigo are five-reel 30-line stepper games each with a four-level progressive awarded through a wheel. The wheel is triggered through three spin symbols occurring together.



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Milestone year for EGT Peru

EGT Peru has had a successful 2018, reaching a milestone of 1,500 installed machines in 300 out of 800 gaming establishments across the country.

"In just two years we have managed to become recognisable in Peru with our gaming content and impeccable services and reached results that no one expected," said Mario Trayanski (pictured), director of EGT Peru.

"Currently we partner with most of the local key operators and the feedback we receive assures us that we are on the right track."

Despite the expected changes in gaming industry taxation in 2019 that will mainly affect smaller casino operators, Trayanski remains optimistic about his office's performance throughout the year.

"I have every reason to believe that the



months ahead will be challenging, busy, but at the end even more successful for EGT Peru, as our main asset is a team of dedicated professionals and a portfolio that would never mislead our customers. Therefore we will go after a market share of at least five per cent."

OpenBet for New Zealand racing

SCIENTIFIC Games has cemented its relationship with the New Zealand Racing Board with the launch of its sportsbook powered by the company's OpenBet technology.

Now live and available to punters through the New Zealand TAB, the sportsbook lets punters place bets across mobile and digital platforms powered by SG Digital's OpenBet sports betting technology.

The new sportsbook is amplified with player account management capabilities, sophisticated feeds aggregation system and latest user experience technology. Integrating with NZRB's retail and pools operations and enabling enhanced features such as cashout, improved in-play and fewer suspensions, TAB punters will now have access to a modern and fully

featured sportsbook.

Keith O'Loughlin, SVP sportsbook at SG Digital, said: "The New Zealand Racing Board fully understands its punters, so it knows the value of Scientific Games' user insight-driven experiences built on a reliable and stable platform."

"We're proud to support them with our OpenBet technology and create a revolutionary product for punters in the market via a front-end player experience built on the latest technology also available to our US customers."

John Allen, CEO of the New Zealand Racing Board, said: "This is the most ambitious and technically complex project our organisation has ever undertaken and together with SG Digital we've delivered a sophisticated, world-class betting experience for our customers."

20 years for Casino Technology

CASINO Technology this year celebrates its 20th anniversary as a gaming manufacturer present in many global markets.

In a rapidly changing technology era, the company has achieved two decades of steady growth, creating a diverse product portfolio that covers not only the land-based, but also the online gaming industry.

Casino Technology was founded back in 1999, obtaining its first gaming manufacturing licence in Bulgaria. Today the company has offices and distributors in over 20 countries. A dedicated team of hundreds of developers, engineers, mathematicians and designers provide next-generation gaming experiences with novelty solutions, recognised in more than 50 jurisdictions.

Milo Borissov, founder, president and CEO, commented: "These 20 years for Casino Technology can be defined as a kaleidoscope of



creativity, hard work and broadening business horizons. It is enough time to recognise the key elements needed to attain success and appreciate the factors and qualities needed to build a meaningful business.

"Today, we look ahead to our next steps to create a leading company of the 21st century, building on our strengths."



Downtown debut for IGT 4D game

THE Plaza Hotel and Casino is the first downtown Las Vegas venue to feature IGT's Wheel of Fortune 4D game.

The game pairs gesture recognition and mid-air haptic technologies to offer players a unique gaming experience.

Gesture recognition technology enables players to interact with and manipulate the game's 3D objects without having to wear 3D glasses and the mid-air haptic technology allows players to experience tactile feedback from the game's graphics.

The Wheel of Fortune 4D game is a wide-area progressive jackpot game that is housed in IGT's towering CrystalCurve True 4D cabinet.

SuzoHapp forms digital unit

SUZOHAPP has announced plans to form a new global business unit to support its software and digital market offerings.

This new group will be called SuzoHapp Digital. "Software is a core differentiator for us in the market," said CEO Drew Scielzo. "Given our continued investment in this area, it made sense to create a group focused solely on our software products and digital payment solutions."

This new business unit will be headed by Rory Herriman, the current CTO for software and digital systems. Herriman will assume the new role of executive vice president and general manager for SuzoHapp Digital.

"This group is about customer care, innovation and expertise development," he said. "The additional focus will help us anticipate and address customer needs, develop and deepen our expertise and drive innovation in the markets we serve."



IGAMING NEWS



InterGaming's monthly round-up of i-gaming news, courtesy of our sister publication INTERGAMINGi

/// BETSSON
ambassador and former Liverpool and Norway star John Arne Riise is to engage attendees at the London Affiliate Conference by running a football contest.



Hosted on Betsson Group Affiliate stand 136, Riise will run a contest featuring a leaderboard in which players are invited to hit the target to achieve a score higher than Riise manages himself.

Achieve it, and players can claim prizes including a signed Liverpool shirt and signed footballs.

There is also the opportunity for the experience of a lifetime in meeting Riise in person and going away with a signed photo, with a Fujii instant camera printing pics with the Champions League winner to take away there and then.

Riise will be also going round the arena to meet and greet all attendees of the show.

/// WILLIAM Hill has announced its full-year adjusted operating profit for 2018 will be around £234m, down 15 per cent on the previous year.

That result is in line with guidance in the range of £225m to £245m. Underlying profit was up four per cent year-on-year – excluding the impact of enhanced due diligence measures in the online business and the costs involved in US expansion.

In a trading statement, William Hill said its online division delivered a “good underlying performance”, while commenting on “excellent” growth in its US existing business. The group is currently live in seven US states, with the overall US business broadly breaking even.

Retail profits reduced year-on-year, with wider high street conditions challenging.

Meanwhile, William Hill has completed the recommended public cash offer to the shareholders in MRG and extended the acceptance period.

The offer has been accepted to such extent that William Hill, following completion, will hold approximately 92 per cent of the shares and votes in MRG. All conditions for the completion of the offer have thus been met, including the condition regarding a minimum acceptance level of 90 per cent.

/// THE US Department of Justice has put forth a new legal opinion that says the Wire Act should apply to all forms of gambling and not only sports betting – potentially affecting other forms of igaming in the country that crosses state lines.

First reported by Online Poker Report, the opinion which has come from the DOJ's Office of Legal Counsel could adversely affect daily fantasy sports, intrastate online casino and poker, online lottery sales and marketing across state lines for all types of gambling.

The DOJ's new opinion replaces its 2011 iteration released under the Obama administration, which stated that the Wire Act only applied to sports betting.

The Wire Act originally emerged in 1961 and was designed to fight against organised crime by outlawing racing and sports betting across communications systems in the US. Controversy then reigned concerning its scope when it was used in the 1990s to prosecute online gambling.

The OLC's new opinion states: “While the Wire Act is not a model of artful drafting, we conclude that the words of the statute are sufficiently clear and that all but one of its prohibitions sweep beyond sports gambling.

“We further conclude that that the 2006 enactment of UIGEA (Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act) did not alter the scope of the Wire Act.”

/// MICROGAMING lived up to its reputation of generating life-changing wins by paying out €154,954,249 through its progressive jackpot network in 2018.

In total, nine lucky players took home seven-figure sums from Microgaming's progressive jackpot games, equating to more than €40m in winnings.

The largest jackpot win was through Microgaming's Mega Moolah progressive, with €18,915,872.81 paid out on Friday, September 28, at Grand Mondial Casino. Won by a player on a mobile device, this set a new payout record for the popular progressive online slot, eclipsing the €17,879,645.12 that earned Microgaming the Guinness World Records title for the “largest jackpot payout in an online slot machine game” in 2015.

Three weeks into 2019, Microgaming's progressive jackpot network is showing no signs of slowing down, with a lucky 32Red player having scooped a €1,162,021.24 jackpot playing Major Millions on January 2. The network has paid out €980m to date, making it the largest in the industry, and with the Mega Moolah jackpot

Bethard gains Irish licence

BETHARD is announcing its latest national licence – this time, from Ireland.

The Irish Revenue Department has granted Bethard Group a remote bookmaker's licence. It means Bethard has now secured five national gaming licences in Europe, with the company is expecting further licences in 2019.

“We are moving forward at an exceptional speed and I think we have managed to demonstrate our sincerity in our ambition to create Europe's leading betting company,” said Erik Skarp (below), founder and CEO of Bethard Group.



currently topping €17m, total payouts are fast approaching the €1bn mark.

/// THE Dutch gaming authority, the KSA, issued a record €1.7m in fines during 2018.

There were 23 sanction decision in all. Of the seven administrative fines, five were in connection with the provision of online games of chance to Dutch consumers. The fined companies were Bet-At-Home, Corona, Mr Green, CyberRock/Honeydew and WHG International.

Under current Dutch laws it is not possible to gain a licence to offer online games to Dutch players, although an act to introduce legalised remote gaming is currently with the Dutch Senate.

/// THE regulated sports betting market in Italy has posted revenue growth of 22.6 per cent year-on-year to €1.6bn in 2018, according to reports locally.

Research firm Eilers and Krejciek has estimated that €640m came through online sports betting – a rise of 16 per cent year-on-year – and €950m through the land-based sector, up 23 per cent compared to 2017's figure. The land-based sector also benefited from turnover growth and a margin of 17 per cent.

Online sports betting posted a margin of 10 per cent for the year, with turnover at €6.4bn, up 14 per cent.



SINGLE PLATFORM for land-based & online gaming



AVANTGARDE TRIO



BLUEPRINT TO UNVEIL FIRST B1 PRODUCT AT ICE 2019

BLUEPRINT Machines is the market leader in the UK street gaming sector, drawing on many years of manufacturing and operational experience gained as part of the Gauselmann Group of companies.

The collaboration with sister company Blueprint Gaming has been particularly beneficial - providing unparalleled proven content from the online casino gaming space, which has been utilised by Blueprint Machines to create an optimal player experience in AGCs, pubs and bingo halls.

In the past few years, the Blueprint brand has become more dominant, with increasing numbers of machines in the street sector, thanks to their attractive cabinets and market-leading content. The time has now come to extend this influence into the UK casino market with a B1 slot product.

The Avantgarde Trio is a further testament to the strength and capabilities of the Gauselmann design and development teams who have surpassed themselves in delivering this world-class casino cabinet.

Blueprint has given the cabinet a UK twist and has furnished it with a number of B1 games that include the most popular online titles such as Eye of Horus and Fishin Frenzy. The new B1 offer will make its debut at ICE 2019.

"Over the last year, the Blueprint and Gauselmann teams have carried out extensive research of the market and consulted at length with leading casino operators, in order to confidently deliver a product which we are certain will be as successful as those we have released into pubs, arcades and bingo," says Simon Barff, Blueprint operations managing director.

"We are extremely proud to be showcasing



Simon Barff



Gavin Wright

the Avantgarde Trio at ICE," adds UK sales manager Gavin Wright. "I joined Blueprint Machines from a background in the international casino sector, where I have long admired the Gauselmann brand and product. The feedback from UK customers has been extremely welcoming and we look forward to having more

in-depth conversations on how Blueprint can add value to their operations."

Simon Barff concludes: "This project wouldn't have been possible without the support of our international teams and it's testament to the close working relationships across the entire Gauselmann Group that we can bring this exciting product to ICE. We look forward to showcasing the product and to having our initial test up and running by the end of Q1."

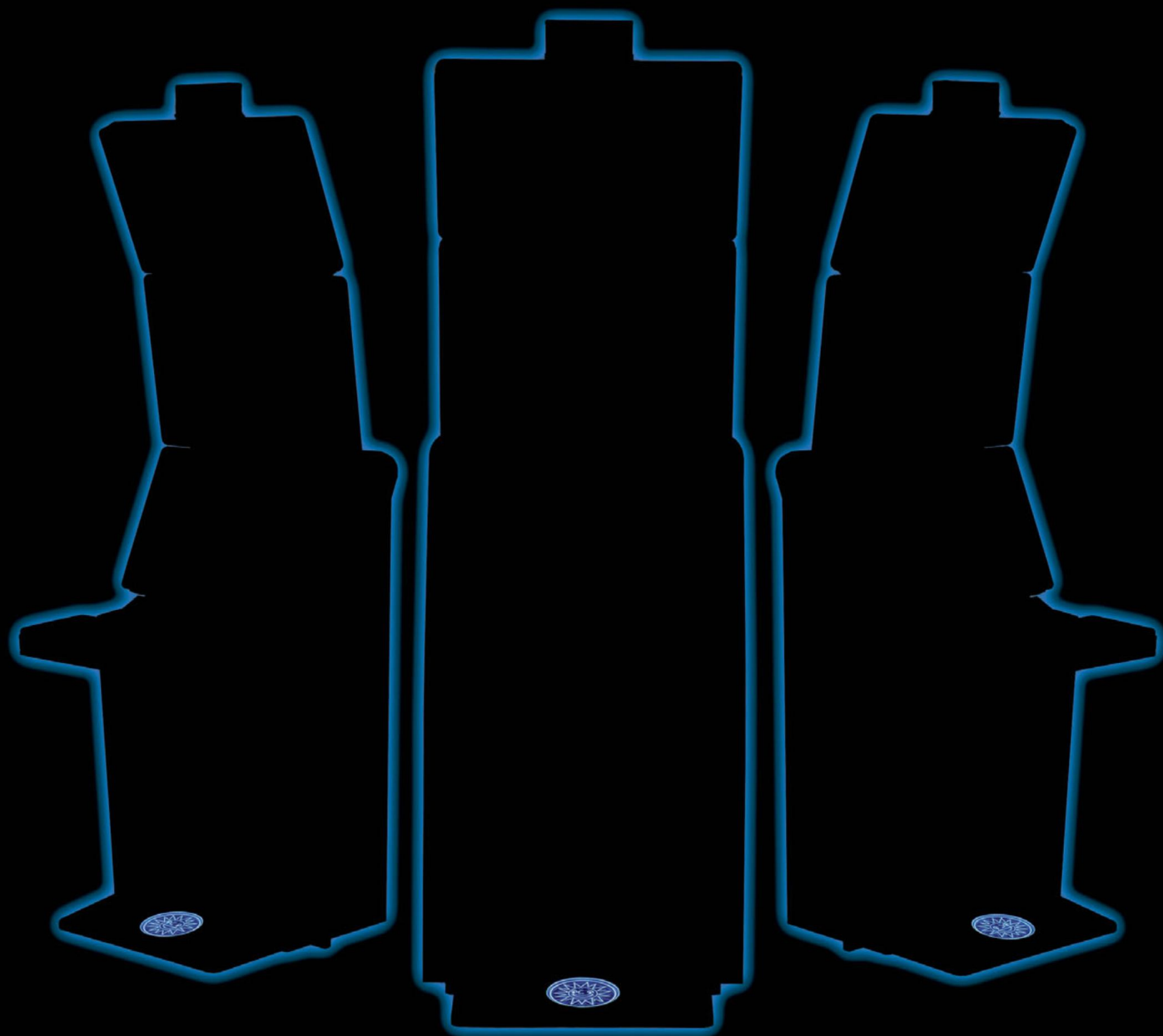
Blueprint Gaming will also be exhibiting its full-range of slots at this year's ICE exhibition, including the latest addition to its portfolio of branded games. Based at stand N4-210, delegates can experience a sneak preview of the new release, and relive the excitement of the best from 2018. Blueprint's fast-growing catalogue of licensed slots will also be on view, which include This is Spinal Tap, TED, The Goonies and Top Cat.

Matt Cole, managing director at Blueprint Gaming, said: "We've enjoyed great success with our branded slots in recent times, with operators appreciating the impact they have in driving interest and attracting new customers. We're sure the latest additions, which will be on show at ICE, will go down a storm."

The innovative slot developer will have its biggest presence at the ExCeL London to date, with a dedicated area as part of the Gauselmann Group stand. Delegates will be able to find out more about Blueprint's comprehensive range of games.

As well as incorporating the popular Megaways mechanic into its recent releases, licensed by Big Time Gaming, the provider has found great success with its Pub Fruit Series. Releases such as Deal or No Deal - The Perfect Play that brings the fruit machine style pub game to the online market has proved popular with players and will continue through 2019 with a strong roadmap of games to extend the series. □

More than Imagination



The All New B1 - UK Avantgarde Trio
Come and see it at ICE - Stand N4-210

THE THIRD SEGMENT

InterGaming talks to the chief executive officer of Interblock, John Connelly, about the part the company is playing in raising the global profile of electronic table games

INTERGAMING: Are electronic table games finally getting the global recognition they deserve and if so why?

John Connelly: Global recognition for ETGs is increasing each year as more and more operators begin to understand the advantages of ETGs as it relates to revenue generation, cost reduction, game security and most importantly engaged players.

Historically casino floors were typically thought to be made up of two segments: live table games and slots. Now, globally ETGs have become the third segment of the floor. The footprints of ETGs have grown in every region over the last three years.

A common trend we are now seeing is casinos completely transitioning their \$5 live table game play to ETGs with great success. As an industry it is known that traditional \$5 and even \$10 live tables tend to lose money for operators. The transition to ETG technology has proven to deliver significant increases to the casinos' EBITDA and margins, while player acceptance is being realised across all product segments.

ETGs are capable of delivering more hands per hour, no labour costs, considerably less infrastructure expenses such as chip movement and removal of the mistakes that human intervention can cause.

Operators' data is revealing that ETGs are bringing in new players and incremental revenue, while expanding their footprint to accommodate the increased demand.

Currently ETGs make up approximately one per cent of slot floor space in the US, as opposed to 15 to 20 per cent in Asia and Europe. This dynamic is changing in North America as casino management gains a clearer understanding of the benefit that ETGs offer. With the cost of salaries and benefits rising every year, operators need to look to different solutions to provide products and content to their players while controlling costs. Automated and video ETGs are the perfect option for jurisdictions that do not allow live games.

We have also found that ETGs attract not only slot players, but players from live tables and video poker as well - which makes ETGs the central conduit on the casino floor, the place where all the different segments of the market come together.

In what way has technology aided the development of these products?

Advances in technology have allowed ETGs to generate more handle per hour without the use of labour. We are seeing up to 50 per cent more games being played on our devices per hour than with a traditional live table game. In other cases where a live dealer stadium design is implemented, we are able to use a single dealer to service 10 times the number of players you would find in a traditional table game environment, dramatically reducing direct and indirect costs.

In addition, electronic table games have the software capability to increase the hold percentage on table games by offering multiple side bets simultaneously, without slowing down the game or increasing the risk of dealer error.

The game speed and pricing of an electronic table game can be adjusted for a casino based on their player base and location. This is extremely important to casino operators as the pace of the game, average bet, length of playing session and the house advantage dictate the profitability of a table.

The greatest benefit technology has brought to Interblock products over the past year, in terms of software, has been the ability to have multigame and multiplay capabilities. Players can now play



up to four games simultaneously on the same screen. They can also connect to external generators located elsewhere on the casino floor from their play station. This allows players to have continuous game play without having to change seats or switch screens to toggle between their favourite games.

What are the benefits of installing ETGs to the casino operator?

Operators are under increasing pressure to find ways to optimise their casino floors to drive incremental EBITDA and margins. The ability to take a segment of the floor that has been around for decades and automate it through technology is something being taken very seriously by the major operators around the world. Combine this with the fact that players have embraced this new form of electronic tables games and it is a winning combination for both casinos and consumers alike.

In addition, operators understand that their gaming floor must evolve as their current customer base ages out and they must create new experiences and offerings to attract a younger, more diverse clientele and electronic table games fill this need. Some of the benefits ETGs offer to the operator are:

Minimal to no staff required: as the cost of labour and benefits rise, the cost of staffing a table games department has become very expensive. The dealers, pit clerks and multiple layers of supervision have placed financial constraints on many operators. Electronic table games offer properties the ability to provide these games 24/7 with a completely automated version or a live dealer version, both reducing overhead costs and increasing the handle and hold per hour.

Dealer to player ratio substantially increases: in a stadium set-up, for example, you can connect an unlimited amount of play stations to one or more live tables. One dealer can easily deal to 100 players at a time as opposed to seven on a standard table game.

These same play stations can turn into a fully automated stadium during non-peak hours, ensuring that a section of the casino floor is always active and generating constant revenue, even when dealers are not present. When you add in the fact that you can play up to four games at once on your screen, it quickly translates into more coin-in and time on device for the operator.

Faster games: increasing handle equals greater profitability for the casinos. ETGs generate significantly more games/outcome per



interblock STADIUM

UNLIMITED STADIUM CONFIGURATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Operators can adapt and update their floor space to meet players' needs, adding play stations with dealer assist, automated and video generators - with a library of games that includes Roulette, Blackjack, Craps, Sic-Bo, Baccarat and more! Interblock's Stadium gives casinos even more ways to deliver a premium player experience.



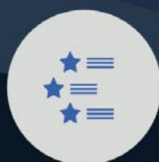
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/// Q&A: INTERBLOCK

hour than any live table, translating into a higher coin-in for the operator.

No payout mistakes: because all transactions are handled by the game, there is no dealer to make a payout mistake, no chance of collusion between staff and players and no costs associated with chip movement, table maintenance or game security.

Higher hold percentages: due to technology, ETGs are capable of offering multiple side bets simultaneously; thus the casinos are able to take traditional table games, which have a theoretical hold of one per cent, and increase this to over six per cent on average.

Attracts players who are uncomfortable playing live table games: people are more likely to walk up to an electronic table game and try it, rather than walk up to a table with live players, where players might comment on how they are playing the game. The intimidation factor goes away with an ETG.

What makes Interblock products stand out from the competition?

Interblock has been wholly focused on the ETG business for more than 25 years and is known not only for its innovation but also for delivering luxury gaming products. With our deep product profile, we are the only electronic table games manufacturer capable of creating such a diverse portfolio of products for casino patrons. Our products are modular and customisable, allowing us to work with any casino footprint.

When you focus on one area of the casino floor, statistically you tend to do a better job. We have tried our best to take this to the next level by creating a very unique product segmentation strategy, allowing us to offer all casinos the luxury and quality the Interblock brand is known for.

We pride ourselves on innovation, on leading and not following when it pertains to our specific segment of the floor. We are constantly researching ways to bring new players into the ETG space and have achieved this through various types of product offerings.

As an example, a standalone ETG attracts a very different player than a stadium design. We feel this is equally the case when we will launch our Universal Cabinets in the coming months.



How can ETG manufacturers increase their market share in the future?

Listen to your customers and players. Use data-driven decision making and try your best to innovate and create leap-frogging technology with the highest barriers to entry.

Any other comments?

I personally believe we are about to enter into a phase within the gaming sector where the industry will migrate from a slot, live table game and then ETG culture, into a slot, ETG and then live table game reality.

This will be driven by reduced operating expenses, player demand, technology advancements and a range of other factors that will make table game automation the standard in the near future. □

/// COMMENT

WHY A ROBUST GAMING ECOSYSTEM LEADS TO SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

By Quixant CEO Jon Jayal

In nature, the importance of balance in an ecosystem is well understood. Biologists and ecologists have studied the complex inter-relationships between plants, animals and microorganisms for centuries but, despite this, many of the natural world's secrets continue to evade us.

The interactions between elements continuously evolve and adapt to the constantly changing demands while the threats to these elements remain both substantial and frequent. The key to survival is the ability to collaborate for mutual benefit.

As is frequently the case, in the corporate world companies stand to learn a lot from nature's success and its ability to thrive amid the most threatening environments. While the gaming industry has unquestionably evolved over decades, at its heart the major drivers are the same: an unrivalled, captivating player experience which entices them to play and keeps them doing so.

EGM manufacturers have spent millions of dollars developing and maintaining the software and hardware infrastructure which underpins their games. For many years this infrastructure has served its purpose



and enabled manufacturers to launch countless games which have been highly profitable.

Incremental changes in the infrastructure have been necessary to accommodate new technology and regulatory requirements, but at its heart the infrastructure remains the same.

With endless distractions from regulation, meeting ever-increasing stakeholder expectations, technology evolutions and changing player demographics, it is easy to de-emphasise the importance of player experience.

This is where a strong ecosystem can help. Being tapped into a strong, well developed technology ecosystem, which is organically adapting to address these distractions, allows gaming companies to focus their creativity on the player experience, which is key.

By leveraging a purpose-built technology ecosystem, such as that offered by Quixant's Gaming Ecosystem, the incredible creativity at the heart of games developers can be unleashed. No more do manufacturers need to worry about regulation or technology evolution because the gaming ecosystem handles those changes.

It is the role of the ecosystem developer to pull together different technologies from a variety of manufacturers and enable them to interact to underpin the game. Through this continuous evolution and as necessary revolution in their selected ecosystem, EGM manufacturers can be confident that their greatest creative ideas can be realised without hinderance in record time. This focus on the core driver to business performance drives enhanced stakeholder value.

It is either that or face the risk of a similar unfortunate fate to that of the dinosaurs.

GAME ON!



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sales@quixant.com





Martin Storm



Filippo Ferri

CREATING A BUZZ

BMM Testlabs enjoyed significant progress in 2018 and here **InterGaming** asks four of the company's leading personnel about those developments

THERE is a lot of buzz in the industry about BMM. What were some of the important developments for the company in 2018, especially in connection with your business in Europe?

Martin Storm, CEO and global president of BMM Testlabs, said:

"2018 has been a year of significant growth for BMM around the world. We grew substantially in our core certification business across all key markets - US, Australia, Asia, Europe, South America and Africa.

"We achieved significant growth in our specialised QA business in Canada, relaunched our igaming business in Europe, opened a new lab in Romania and a branch office in Poland, as well as launching a new world-class cyber defence offering.

"2018 was especially important for the development and growth of our European business. We moved our European headquarters to our Barcelona office and expanded our regional executive and management team. I'm pleased to say that we achieved a dominant market position in the Italian VLT market with an estimated 75 per cent plus market share.

"After launching commercial operations in Romania in June 2018, BMM was named as the Best Lab in Romania by *Casino Life and Business Magazine*.

"This has been our first full year of dedicated igaming coverage. Under the leadership of Gene Chayevsky, executive vice president, Europe and South America, igaming efforts are led by Filippo Ferri, director of igaming and new product strategy, as well as Francesco Bianchi, director of igaming operations and technical compliance.

"Marzia Turrini, senior vice president of business development, and Marc Lee, senior vice president of operations, both for Europe and South America, support the igaming team.

"Notable achievements include building dedicated igaming sales and service delivery teams, rapid market share gains across major European B2B suppliers and operators as well as achieving number one market share in Colombia and in Spain for new licensees.

"As we enter 2019 with a larger and more experienced service delivery team, I am confident that we will continue to successfully meet any challenges of rapid growth."

BMM has stayed out of the igaming market for many years. It seems like you decided to come back and to come back seriously in 2018. How did that work out for you and what is the outlook for your European igaming business for 2019?

Filippo Ferri, director of igaming strategy and new products, stated: "In 2017, the decision was made to expand operations and become a bigger player in the online space. BMM has provided igaming services to the industry for many years and we hold accreditations in all jurisdictions.

A third licensing window in Spain, plus the long-awaited opening of the regulated Swedish market to new entrants, have created some interesting opportunities. BMM was one of the first independent test labs to service every newly regulated market: a must for our clients.

"To be able to offer certifications for Spain and Sweden at the same time is a monumental operational effort for a laboratory. It involves a large number of highly skilled engineering resources that only a globally staffed laboratory like BMM can make available.

"BMM is licensed to test in the US and with the opening of the sports betting market our lab is uniquely positioned to offer support in all US jurisdictions to our European customers. The recruitment of seasoned executives from the online gaming certification industry has helped instill faith in the industry that BMM is a top global expert in igaming. As Pennsylvania opens its doors to online casino and sports betting, we are taking top European players into that market.

"We also continue to support our existing partners in Colombia and will be helping new entrants obtain licences in South America during 2019. It's worthy to note that BMM is the only test lab to hold accreditations in Colombia, Romania and the Czech Republic.

"So, as you can imagine, 2018 has been a tremendous year of growth for BMM's igaming division and one that will make 2019 a landmark year in BMM's history. The Spanish office is moving to new, state-of-the-art facilities over the coming weeks in order to accommodate this growth. Our recruiting drive continues and we truly could not have hoped for a better start."

We understand that the Italian VLT market has recently been opened to private certification laboratories and that BMM has quickly managed to achieve a leadership position there. What was the secret of your success?

Marzia Turrini, senior vice president, business development, Europe and South America, said: "BMM is the premier VLT certification lab in Italy. We work with all of the Italian concessionaires and with the majority of the games and systems providers in the Italian VLT market. We are very proud of BMM's recognition as a reliable, independent and cost-effective partner in this market.

"BMM is synonymous with service and, most importantly, expertise. Since certification of VLTs was exclusively managed by SOGEI prior to 2018, BMM had offered QA and pre-compliance services to the key stakeholders of this product segment. This service has helped the players in minimising the risk of resubmission during the SOGEI tests and guaranteed time-to-market for both the concessionaires and their providers.

"BMM has become the preferred choice as certification of VLTs was finally moved to independent labs. No other lab in the market has gathered the same level of expertise and awareness around this complex regulatory framework.

"However, success is not restricted to knowhow only. At BMM we also strongly believe in customer service and adopt a consulting approach which aims to guide and support our customers from the beginning to the end of the certification process.

"While we will continue working to maintain this position of leadership in the VLT market, we are also working hard to achieve the same position in the online and AWP markets."



Marzia Turrini

What are some key industry trends that are likely to impact your business in 2019?

Gene Chayevsky, executive vice president, Europe and South America, commented: "BMM is looking forward to a very exciting year in 2019, with key industry trends expected to favorably impact our business. One major, long-term trend is the continued growth of regulated gaming markets and associated requirements for product certification and post-implementation audits.

"Clearly the biggest story of the year is the 2018 US Supreme Court decision to overrule a 1992 law that banned sports betting in most of the country. As a result, New Jersey, Mississippi, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island launched legalised sports betting.

"Additionally, many others introduced bills for legalising the activity. Many more states will surely follow in the coming years and BMM is especially well positioned to bring our European customers to these new US markets.

"It now appears that Brazil will be moving towards regulating at least



Gene Chayevsky

some segments of its very large gaming market - starting with land-based and online sports betting. The opening of the regulated Brazil market will have a long-term positive impact on the gaming industry and BMM is providing as much support as possible.

"In addition, several European and South American markets are expected to launch regulated igaming operations in 2019 - Sweden, Switzerland, Peru and perhaps several others - further expanding BMM's addressable market.

"Another important trend is the increased awareness of existing cyber security risks in the gaming industry and willingness to address those risks, especially in the new post-GDPR era. Our industry is becoming more familiar with the scary statistics relating to losses from cyber breaches and many understand that it is not a matter of 'if' but of 'when' they are breached.

"BMM's solutions are designed to help companies implement a proactive cyber defence to minimise the probability of a cyber breach and, even more importantly, to minimise any damage if such a breach occurs. Expect to hear a lot more about BMM's cyber defence offerings in 2019." □

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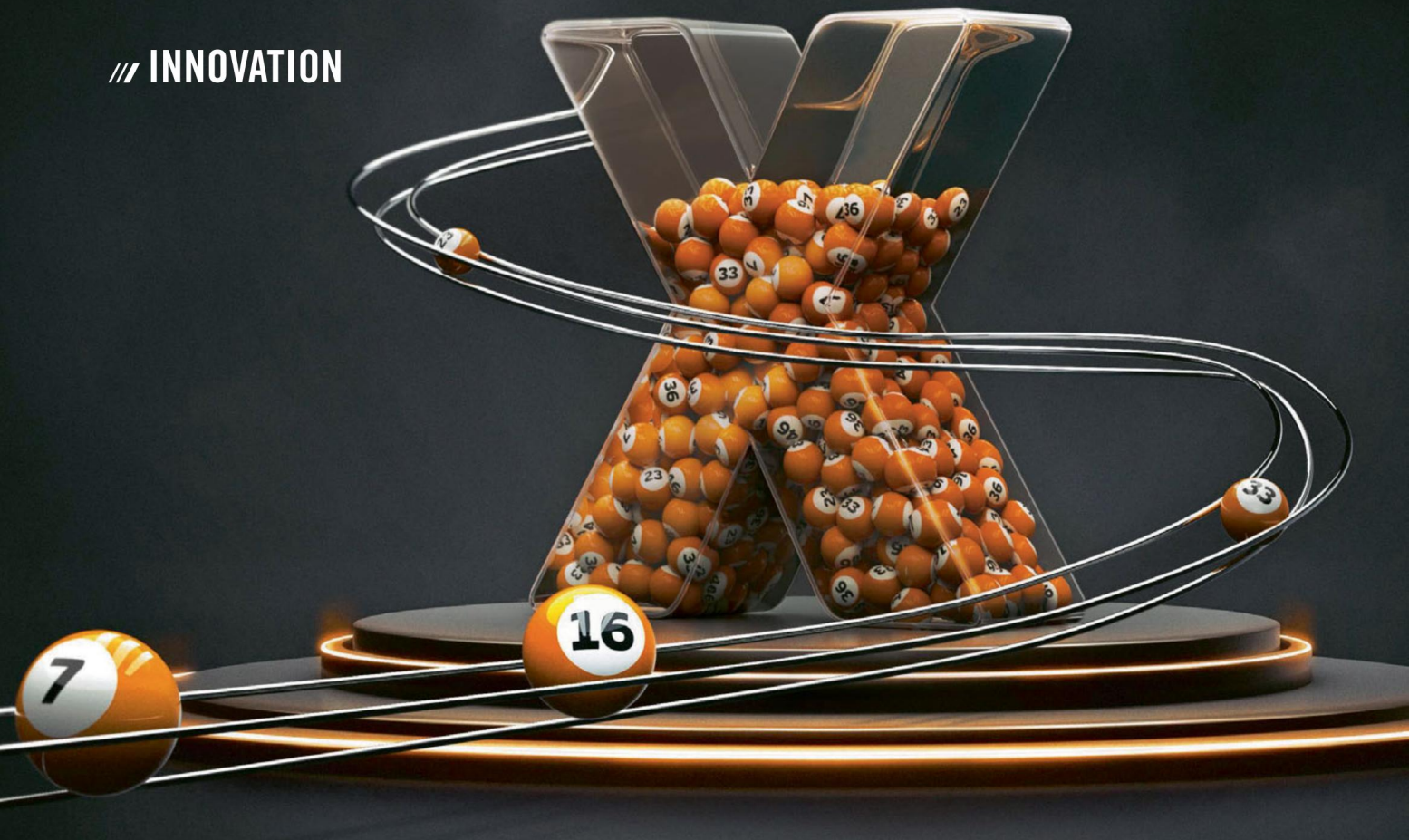
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INTRALOT: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

INTRALOT has embarked on a holistic cross-channel, cross-vertical approach to lottery and betting solutions that reflects the tectonic changes in the digital era both in terms of consumer behaviour and new technology trends for digital transformation.

As a leading gaming solutions supplier to regulated operators around the globe, Intralot will showcase its next generation products to cater for players' modern needs and offer entertaining and responsible gaming experiences, revealing a comprehensive digital transformation strategy in a multi-connected world, at ICE 2019.

Intralot, ranking among the EU's top industrial R&D spenders according to the EU Commissions Scoreboard for the past 10 years, embraces change and evolution by investing extensively in technology innovation in order to meet the fast-changing needs of consumers and clients and maintain its leadership position in the gaming industry.

In this respect, during ICE 2019 Intralot will highlight its new lottery and sports betting platforms that focus on a holistic approach that involves cross-platform and cross-vertical infrastructure, along with a modern touchpoint philosophy and reduced costs of ownership.

Lotos X is the most advanced, future-proof and fully parametrical lottery platform. It enables lottery operators to design, configure and implement their entire gaming offering as well as their planned portfolio expansion.

Game and draw lifecycles are managed and monitored through a fast, real-time process, achieving minimum time-to-market and an

unprecedented simplification of lottery operators' day-to-day activities.

It offers a true omni-channel experience to the end user by allowing the same game to be served through multiple interfaces, satisfying every channel's specific need. Lotos X ensures security and reliability at all levels while it provides real-time financial, monitoring and reporting services and is designed following the notions of innovation, flexibility and scalability, expected to shape next-generation player experiences.

Leveraging more than 25 years of worldwide, in-field experience and an industry-leading portfolio of 29 sports betting projects and operations, Intralot developed its next-generation, feature-rich and versatile sports betting platform, Intralot Orion.

It sits at the heart of a holistic sports betting solution that incorporates managed trading services and a wide portfolio of terminals, both for the player and for the retailer, tailored to the needs of each sports betting operation.

The platform serves the entire player journey across channels with a rich set of bet features, while it enables parametrisation of the sports betting content and differentiated risk management on a per-channel basis.

Intralot Orion offers pre-integration with multiple commercial feeds, event creation, markets pricing, resulting and in-play incidents while due to its cross-channel capabilities it can easily integrate with the lottery platform and provide both cross-selling opportunities and economies of scale to lotteries and operators.

Intralot Orion and Lotos X can be optionally enhanced with CMS marketing tools and PAM platforms, which carry the latest security and

transparency features, KYC and geo-fencing and payment provider integration capabilities.

During ICE 2019, Intralot will also present a vast variety of options for the retail ecosystem combining great performance with in-store modernisation to efficiently fulfill every sports betting and lottery operation need.

In terminal technology Intralot will showcase Photon and Proton, the terminals which utilise innovative image scanning technology and offer the smallest footprint in their class with top-notch processing power and unique modular architecture, combined with many options and add-ons.

In vending and self-service terminals, Intralot will bring, for the first time in Europe, the brand-new terminals Winstation 30 and Dreamtouch Smart, the best-in-class vending designed specifically for the sales of scratch, draw-based and instant games offering the largest scratch ticket capacity in the industry in their categories. Dreamtouch Smart is the first instant ticket vending machine for purchasing unlimited draw-based games, terminal instant games and up to 25 instant scratch tickets at the height of 54ins to allow maximum visibility for in-store shoppers.

Intralot will also display Winstation 30, the first vending machine in the lottery industry to dispense up to 30 different instant tickets and online lottery games with just a simple push of a button.

Equipped additionally with a 10.1ins touchscreen, it provides players the opportunity to select online scratches and draw-based games while its big embedded monitor displays any kind of multimedia content and digital signage, attracting passing-by customers. □

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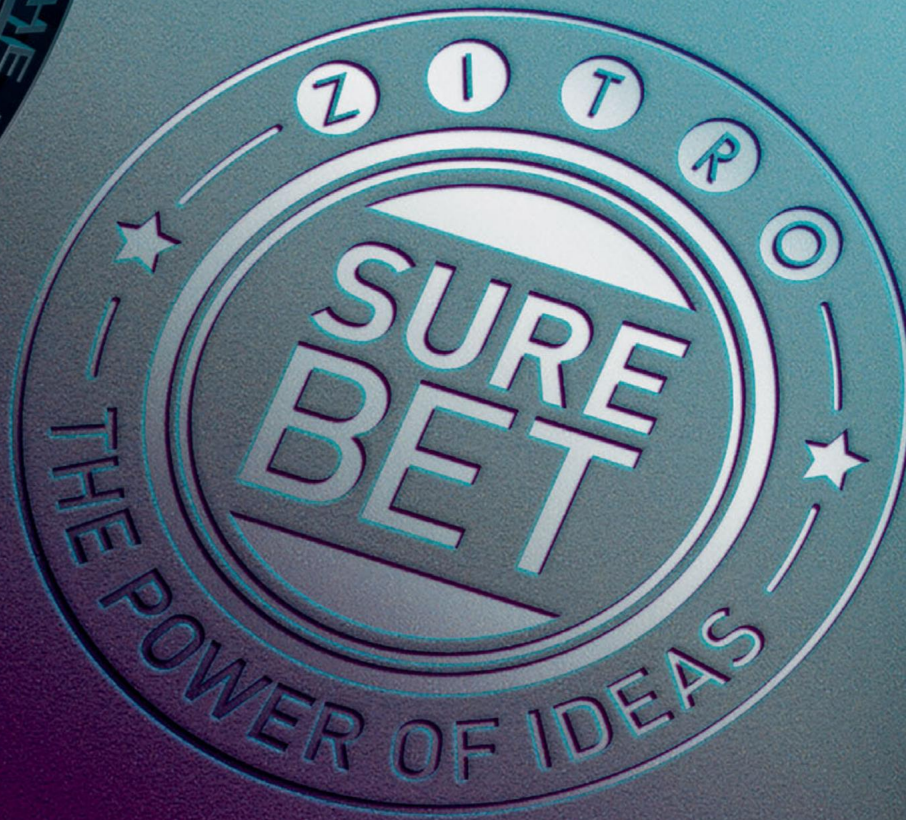
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DRGT: PUTTING THE PLAYER FIRST

DR Gaming Technology CEO and co-founder, Jurgen De Munck, and managing director Africa, Charl Geyser, discuss how it all started and look forward to ICE London

INTERGAMING: DRGT was established in 2005. Jurgen, you've been there from the start and Charl, you've been a part of the business for almost two thirds of that time. Can you tell us how it started for you both?

JDM: DRGT literally started in a garage. We began with a relatively simple idea, one that very quickly became our vision and I guess our entire development mantra: to develop and deliver the best technology that puts the player first.

To fully execute this though, Michiel Van Dam, CTO and co-founder, and I realised that we also needed to not only provide operators with cutting edge technology that was robust and user-friendly, but we also needed to ensure that we had the people and the means to support those products and, more importantly our customers - the operators who use them.

CG: I left Aristocrat after 13 years' service in 2007, dabbled in running my own pubs (with street market machines, of course) for a couple of years and ultimately decided to get back into gaming equipment distribution in 2009.

My involvement with DRGT dates back almost a decade, to when I took on the distribution of the then SiP product. I met Jurgen and Michiel when they purchased SiP in late 2011.

At the time we met, I had secured an EGM distribution contract and was looking for a jackpot service provider to meet a local tender opportunity. In DRGT not only did I find a great jackpot solution, but in my view the most powerful, cost-effective and user-friendly casino management system I had ever come across.

I firmly believed that I had found the proverbial "goose that lays the golden egg" - the perfect disruptor, the product that I could really launch my newly established Simpli-e Gaming Solutions with.

Roll ahead to 2018, and Simpli-e Gaming Solutions is now DRGT Africa, a joint venture between DRGT and South African investment holding company Grand Parade Investments.

DRGT celebrated a decade of successfully operating its management system and WAPs in Switzerland in 2018. You and your team must be very proud of the success?

JDM: We are, very proud. Christian Eder and his team in Austria, as well as Jean-Michel De Busscher and his team in Belgium, have done a great job in securing and then maintaining and growing our presence in Switzerland.

Since installing our first system in Grand Casino Bern in 2008, we have expanded that footprint to over 10 casinos. What remains encouraging is that many of these installations, and others across the globe, follow referrals and endorsements from one operator to the next. You cannot put a price on that sort of marketing; it is invaluable and we treasure it immensely.



Jurgen De Munck

DR Gaming Technology is also the market leader in Belgium, correct?

JDM: Yes, you are quite correct. With our proverbial roots in the country, we did our best to secure as much local support as possible. In fact, I can now proudly say that all nine Belgian casinos manage their operations using our system.

Technology and innovation are the backbone of DRGT's success. How do you retain your competitive edge?

JDM: Michiel, along with our R&D directors and our global product team drive our product development and its associated timelines. Without divulging too much, I think it is safe to say that consumers in general (and this includes gaming players) are becoming more demanding of tailored solutions and ease of use and less tolerant of extended timelines or service intervals.

With this in mind, we need to develop quicker, install quicker and be able to provide operators with technology to engage quicker and more directly with their players. Products like our drMediaManager, drScreen video and TV streaming functionality and our ability to present jackpot and other media to the top screens of EGMs talk directly to this shift.

What can visitors to ICE London expect to see from DRGT?

CG: While we continue to develop and design new jackpot systems and expand on the solutions our casino management systems are able to provide, the key to our success remains our core product offering driven at present by our Tables Management System and our BlackJack11's Tables Jackpot game, our world-leading range of slots jackpots and our revolutionary drScreen player tracking interface and world-leading 8.8ins drScreenUltra player tracking display. These will all be on display in London.

What are your most successful products?

CG: Our most successful slots product is a wide-area progressive jackpot called SunStriker, the second in a series of three bespoke WAPs developed for Sun International. Since inception, it remains the top performing jackpot in Africa. I'm also proud to say that since our initial installation of the first of these three WAPs over five years ago, there has never been a single second of downtime.

Off the back of our slots success we developed BlackJack11's, a fast and easy-to-learn tables jackpot side bet game. To date the game is installed across a number of Sun International and Peermont casinos in South Africa, at the Hippodrome in London, Grand Kaz in the Seychelles, Monterey in Mexico, Casino Platino in the Dominican Republic, Richard's Casino in Peru, as well as a number of casinos in Belgium and Cyprus.

In fact at present it is the most profitable tables side-bet game on the African continent, an accolade we trust we will be able to replicate elsewhere across the globe too.

The above said, what are the advantages of either upgrading to, or installing DRGT's systems at the outset?

JDM: Advances in technology allowed us to provide a truly serverless offering at the outset. It also afforded us the ability to provide more functionality than existing legacy systems and furthermore ensured that we were able to install our product extremely quickly. A case in point was our installation at Grand Casino Basel, where we completed the entire change-over in a single day during normal operating hours.

Does your system operate on all gaming devices?

CG: Absolutely. We're able to operate our systems and jackpots on literally any slot machine, as long as it operates using a legislated protocol. What I'm referring to here are the likes of SAS, ASP, NSW and GRIPS.

For those casinos wanting a new system or jackpot solution, why should they consider DRGT?

JDM: My answer here is not a new one. I think in any industry, whether it be product or service related, the customer (and in our case the player) must come first. Our technology solutions afford operators the functionality and products to do just that.

CG: I agree 100 per cent. If an operator is looking to replace an existing management system, upgrade part of it, or is in the market for a system for a new casino development, they should call us. I can promise DRGT's full commitment to finding a solution that works, is robust, reliable and cost-effective and focused whole-heartedly on putting the player first. □

BUSY REGULATORY YEAR FOR UK GAMING

THE last 12 months have been eventful for the casino industry in the UK, particularly in the regulatory field.

There are currently 155 casino venues in the country, which is slightly up on a couple of years ago. This is due to openings outnumbering closures, due in the main to the accent that operators are putting on overall entertainment rather than just gambling.

Last year began with the news that the UK Gambling Commission, which oversees gambling in the country, was seeing a change at the top. Chief executive Sarah Harrison stepped down to join the UK government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

She had been in charge since 2015 and had been credited with imposing stricter penalties during her tenure, including a record £7.8m fine to online operator 888 and a £2.3m penalty to Ladbrokes Coral.

The hot seat was taken by Neil McArthur. Bill Moyes, chair of the commission, announced the appointment thus: "Neil's appointment is great news for the commission. He brings to the role a thorough understanding of gambling issues and regulation, along with proven commitment to making gambling fairer and safer.

"I'm looking forward to working even more closely with Neil as he leads the commission to make significant progress in raising standards, protecting consumers and the public from gambling-related harm and improving the performance of the National Lottery."

At around the same time it was announced that the UK's land-based operators had agreed for the first time to guarantee that 0.1 per cent of their annual gross gaming yield would go directly to the charity GambleAware.

Before, most operators channeled donations to the charity through their trade association, the National Casino Forum. It was felt that the new, transparent mechanism showed their commitment to meet or exceed the voluntary annual funding target for the sector.

UK operator Grosvenor Casinos won nine trophies at the 2018 British Casino Awards, including the first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award. The recipient was Grosvenor's Richard Wade, director of compliance and responsible gaming, who was recognised for his impressive 38-year career in the gaming industry.

Alan Morgan, managing director of Grosvenor

Casinos, said: "These nine wins are a true reflection of the hard work and dedication that goes into running our 53 casinos across the UK. From outstanding employees to first-class games and the promotion of Goliath, the largest poker tournament in Europe, we have a lot to be proud of."

Also early in 2018, UK operators faced a ban on advertisements that "appeal to problem gamblers." The Committee of Advertising Practice, the body that writes and maintains the UK's advertising codes, announced a new set of standards as part of a drive to prevent harm and promote responsibility.

They included restricting ads that create an inappropriate sense of urgency, including the message to "bet now" during live events. There was also a ban on the trivialisation of gambling in adverts and prevention of approaches that give a skewed perception of risk or control.

///EARLY IN 2018, UK OPERATORS FACED A BAN ON ADVERTISEMENTS THAT 'APPEAL TO PROBLEM GAMBLERS' ///

A major shift during the year was the decision by the government to reduce the top stake on FOBTs in bookmakers' shops from £100 to £2. Originally scheduled for October 2019, the reduction was later brought forward to April 2019 following pressure from proponents.

Leading casino operator Genting UK, which operates 42 casinos across the country, won an award at the Gambling Compliance Global Regulatory Awards in association with GambleAware. The company's head of anti-money laundering, Nigel Harvey, won the Head of AML/MLRO of the Year award for land-based operators.

The award recognises an individual that has taken measures to align their company into a proactive manner through the various AML directives. According to the judges, Harvey was selected as the winner because he "went beyond what is legally required of him and was highly motivational and effective in his work."

In the early summer, US operator Century Casinos announced the opening of a new location in the UK city of Bath. This was the first international standard casino for the central area

of the famous Roman city with five million annual tourists and a population of 200,000.

The official opening in May saw 1,200 guests invited to see the 15,000sq.ft gaming floor with 50 gaming positions on slots and electronic roulette terminals, 14 gaming tables and three bars. Century owns and operates casinos and hotels across the US and Canada and has an Austrian subsidiary with interests in Casinos Poland.

Genting launched a brand new tournament game called SpinSplosion, the first of its kind in the UK. The game offers players one of the most interactive tournaments available. Players collect points by touching symbols as they fall from the top screen down to the bottom screen before disappearing. The product was developed by IGT.

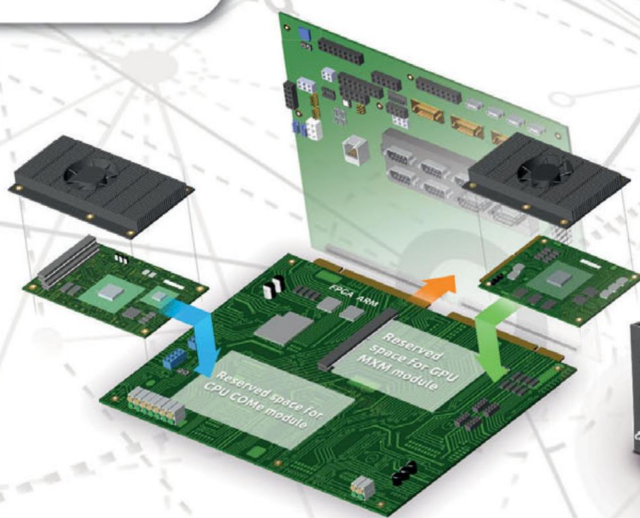
Sharon Lynch, senior electronic gaming manager at Genting UK, said: "We have always been incredibly proud of our gaming offering and we are delighted to be able to offer our customers the opportunity to play this. It's fantastic to be the first casino in the UK to offer this gaming experience."

The Palm Beach Casino in London's Mayfair opened once more towards the end of 2018 following a £2m renovation. Operator Genting refurbished the venue to include a new gaming floor, restaurant and bar and grill.

Casino director Phil Nunn said: "The Palm Beach is one of London's most iconic casinos and, as well as the capital's finest gaming facilities, we are delighted to now have a destination restaurant." The 50-cover venue is overseen by award-winning chef Mahmud Zaman, formerly of Zaman's at The Sportsman Casino.

Late in the year there was another notable event in the UK gambling industry when a high street bank became the first to enable customers to block gambling transactions. Barclays mobile banking users can now block and control spending on gambling websites, retail betting shops, casinos and racetracks, as well as lottery tickets and scratch cards.

Developed with the Money Advice Trust and other advisors, the new service also allows customers to block transactions with supermarkets, restaurants, takeaways, pubs and bars, fuel and premium rate websites and phone lines. The bank said the feature is designed to give customers greater control over their money, as well as help protect them against fraud and scams. □



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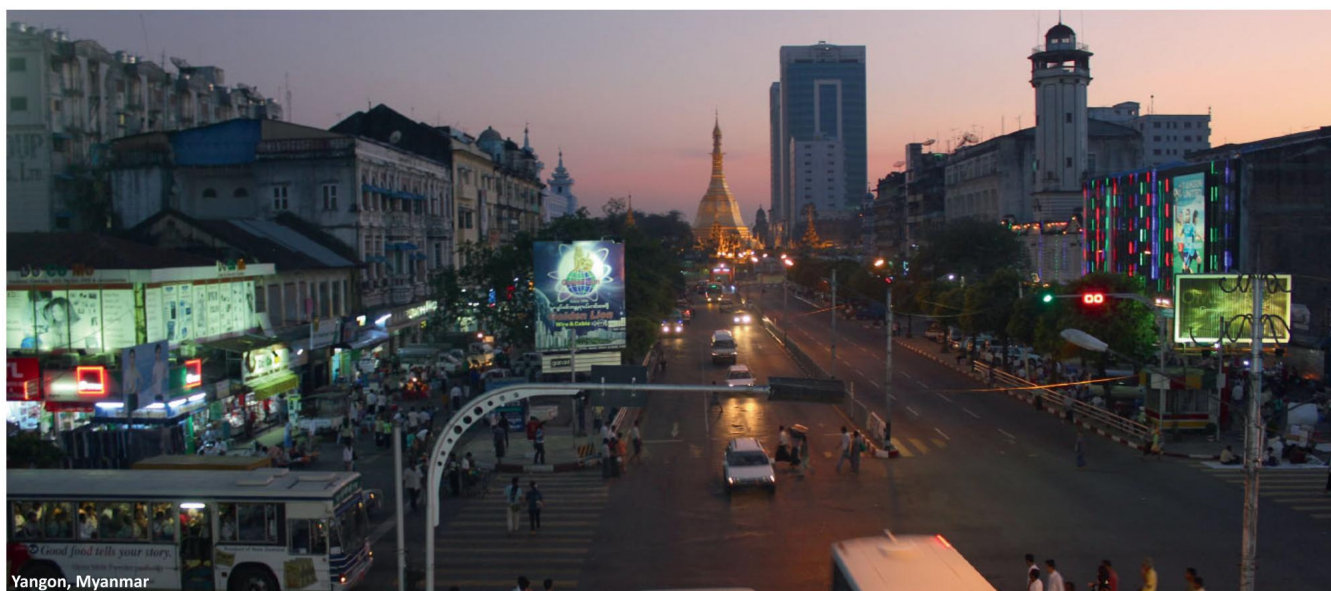


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Myanmar eyes casinos to boost tourism

MYANMAR looks set to be the next Asian jurisdiction to open its doors to IRs as the government seeks to attract much-needed tourism dollars, with experts in the region predicting strong interest from potential investors.

The Gambling Bill 2018 has been passed by the Lower House of the Parliament and is now with the Upper House for revisions and will allow foreigner-only casinos to operate in the south-east Asian country, formerly known as Burma.

Currently, gambling businesses are banned under the Gambling Law of 1986, although several small casinos operate on the coast of Tanintharyi and along the borders with China and Thailand, to which the government turns a blind eye.

"Significant changes are being proposed in relation to gambling in Myanmar. The country has seen a paradigm shift in the last few years with more liberalised policies being pursued," says William Greenlee, partner and managing director of the Myanmar unit of DFDL, a specialist law firm. "Once the proposed amendments enter into force, the landscape is set to change radically."

It is not a coincidence that casino liberalisation comes at a time when Myanmar's currency is plummeting - the kyat has lost 12 per cent of its value against the US dollar since June - and encouraging foreigners to spend will help draw important foreign reserves into the country.

The government will also benefit from income on casino licences and additional taxes on casino operations which will help offset the massive budget deficit, expected to hit K4.9tr (\$3.1bn) this year. The measures are also expected to attract more tourists, with some figures indicating only around 270,000 tourists visit the country annually. Political unrest and insurgent uprisings have hit visitor arrivals.

Two legitimate casinos currently operate at island resorts Tha Htay Island and Yadana Island, near Kawthaung in the far south of Myanmar,

which were set up under a pilot scheme by the military junta in the 1990s.

"As a case in point, the casino operating in Grand Andaman Resort Hotel on Tha Htay Island has been functional for 20 years now, with over \$12m in tax receipts paid to the regional government," Greenlee says.

The new law envisages a situation where casinos operate alongside a hotel and are open to foreign nationals only.

"Foreign casino investors have displayed notable enthusiasm and fervour over the past few years to invest in casino activities in Myanmar," says Greenlee. "What the government is perhaps looking towards is the development of integrated resorts or similar in Rangoon and potentially investment into its tourism centres along the coast and inland."

/// "CASINOS IN BORDER AREAS WOULD EASILY ATTRACT CLIENTS FROM NEIGHBOURING THAILAND AND CHINA, WHERE GAMBLING IS ILLEGAL" ///

Casinos in border areas would easily attract clients from neighbouring Thailand and China, where gambling is illegal.

The government has also said it is planning to upgrade Kawthaung airport to handle international flights to allow more tourists to visit the beautiful Myeik archipelago and Tanintharyi region in the south.

"As far as locations are concerned, obviously Rangoon would be the preferred location and you can imagine a group trying to negotiate a NagaWorld-style monopoly in the commercial capital of Myanmar," says Tim Shepherd, director of Fortuna Investments, referring to the monopoly enjoyed by NagaCorp's property in a 200km radius of the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh.

"After that would come the resort towns both

inland and coastal. Also Myanmar's relations with China will be important to growth; anyone who has visited Sihanoukville (Cambodia) in the last 12 months knows the vast scope of the investment coming from China into the resort and casino business, supported by flights every day from Chinese cities." Around 30 casinos operate in Sihanoukville and 70 more are under construction.

Potential investors are not yet known and the investment required for an IR can vary. "Silver Heritage's project in Nepal, called Tiger Palace, cost less than US\$100m, while the casinos in Vietnam must put down US\$1bn, so that would be the range," adds Shepherd.

The new legislation is not expected to affect the existing small, border hotel casinos, predominantly clustered near the Thai and Chinese borders, notably in towns such as Mong La and Muse in Shan state and Myawaddy in Kayin.

These are operated on licences granted at a local level by provincial government and security forces to operators from across Asia - usually Thai and Chinese investors and local businessmen.

"The Myanmar government's recent approval is therefore interesting but I doubt it will impact any of the operations of the existing casinos along the borders," adds Shepherd.

However, casinos are not always welcome in Myanmar. Hundreds of people, including monks, protested in January in Myawaddy on the Thai border against the continued operation of the illegal casinos there. The area has seen a high social cost in rising crime and substance abuse as local people are drawn to gambling.

"A significant development in the amended law proposes that casinos may only be open to foreign nationals and not Myanmar citizens. It remains to be seen if this will hold true upon enactment of the law and what kinds of implications this categorisation may bring to bear on wider Myanmar society," adds Greenlee. □

NZ race reform hits hurdles

NEW Zealand's Minister of Racing is now taking a more cautious approach to reform of the racing industry after intense lobbying from racing clubs, warnings that the reforms are unworkable and signs from his majority coalition partner that it will not support some of the proposed changes.

The Minister, Winston Peters (pictured), who is also Deputy Prime Minister in New Zealand's coalition government, commissioned a report on the racing industry from prominent Australian racing identity John Messara.

He recommended sweeping changes including stripping the New Zealand Racing Board of most of its powers, leasing out the TAB (which has a monopoly on off-track betting) to an Australian operator, closing 28 of the country's 48 racecourses and devolving power to run thoroughbred, harness racing and greyhounds to the respective codes.

Messara found that "on any test, the thoroughbred racing industry in New Zealand today is in a state of serious malaise."

He recommended creating a prize pool of at least NZ\$100m (\$67m) to increase stakes and provide greater returns to breeders funded by tax reductions on the industry and selling up racing clubs' land.

The most controversial change was use legislation to take the tracks from clubs, sell the land and invest the money in all-weather tracks, better on-track facilities and increased stakes.

When the Messara report was released in

August 2018, Peters endorsed it as "the way forward", but in a speech to the Thoroughbred Racing Conference recently, he was more cautious.

Instead of an "implementation unit" which was to be set up to drive the changes recommended, he has now appointed a Ministerial Advisory Council which "will be charged with setting a sense of direction for the intended racing reforms. It will also report on opportunities and roadblocks to returning the racing industry to a well-managed and sustainable economic growth path."

The five-member advisory council includes some members known to be sceptical about aspects of the proposed changes. In his speech, Peters said the government will "stay faithful to the Messara report."

"We are going to go for broke as much as it possibly can be done. He (Messara) will admit that there are one or two things that we can't do or we have to tweak or change."

The importance of the phrase "as much as it possibly can be done," is stressed by critics and is seen as a softening of stance.

One critic told AGB that Peters still wants to be the saviour of New Zealand racing, but is finding that he cannot easily do so through the pathway set by the Messara report.

The majority partner in the government coalition, the Labour Party, has made it clear that it not at all keen to see off-track betting outsourced to any Australian company.

Doing so would be at odds with the usual Labour Party stance that revenue generated in New Zealand by New Zealanders should stay in New Zealand.

It is a rhetorical line frequently used by Peters' own party, New Zealand First, which is usually stridently nationalistic and anti-foreign ownership.

Peters' speech is silent on the question of nationalising racetracks by legislation, but he has been advised that it is impractical and unworkable by at least one racing industry leader.

Although many racing clubs own the land they use for racing, many others do not. Local

councils, special purpose trusts and Maori tribal groupings often are the owners, which makes the use of legislation to take the land very contentious at a local level and is therefore regarded as a dangerous course politically.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee is seen as a way of making progress on aspects of the Messara reforms that can be achieved and make sense.

"The committee will develop a plan to operationalise the Messara report to deliver better governance and economic outcomes," said Peters. The government was committed to reforming the racing industry, he added.

"The committee will provide an interim report to the Minister for Racing by the end of February 2019, to be followed by Cabinet decisions and legislation to modernise the industry."

"The committee is being created as a potential precursor to the establishment of a Racing Industry Transitional Agency, subject to future government decisions."

Releasing the NZ Racing Board's annual report board, chair Glenda Hughes said the board welcomed the Minister's initiative in setting up Messara report and "we support the majority of recommendations, including refocusing the NZRB as Wagering New Zealand."

Peters' own political party, New Zealand First, draws significant support in certain provincial areas which feel ignored in favour of big cities and taking away treasured local assets would not align well with the party's values and would likely generate dissent among the party's MPs.

"The industry is in urgent need of investment and the resulting revenue from repeal of the betting levy, new synthetic tracks and a refocused venue footprint, in addition to the benefit of NZRB's strategic initiatives will be a game changer for racing," she said.

However, determining the scope and scale of change is now being vested in an advisory committee of racing industry experts which will temper the bold ambitions of the Messara report with a dose of practicality and take into account the political reality of being in a coalition government and needing the votes of provincial areas to stay in Parliament. □



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The Wellington Cup, New Zealand

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SHOWPREVIEW.

ICE LONDON 2019

// FEBRUARY 5-7



APEX GAMING

2018 has been one of the most successful years on record for Apex Gaming, thanks to the global popularity of its complete jackpot game solution Clover Link.

The beauty of Clover Link is that it is available in three different versions, each with a choice of different Pinnacle slot machines. The Big Island consists of eight slots in an eclipse design, the Round Edition has four slots in a circular design and the Wall Edition is the most flexible, as it can be expanded to as many slots as the customer requires.

New for ICE 2019 is the introduction of the Big Island with the 43ins Pinnacle Premium Curved slots. The screen choice is the 43ins Pinnacle Premium Curved, the Pinnacle Black Series with two 24ins monitors or the Pinnacle Premium Curved with three 27ins monitors.

Clover Link has been transformed from a single game to a multigame jackpot solution. Today it itself consists of four popular Apex games that have been brought together in a special way. These games all offer unique features in a four-level jackpot that can be both mystery and progressive, thus motivating all types of players to take part.

In an innovation for ICE the company will be releasing a new set of Clover Link multigames to complement the four already established.

Also on show will be the Apex Player Station electronic roulette. This expandable solution can be linked to up to four roulette wheels (both live and/or electronic) and operators can include the Evo games on it, as well as the Apex Mobile Slots.

The iDROP enables players to exchange their cash or tickets for jetons directly at the live gaming table. Cashing out is simple as the amount is paid out in ticket form by the iDROP. The integrated touchscreen makes it simple to use for croupiers and the fact that it is linked to the management system gives management complete control of the drop.

The iDROP family has been extended with the iDROPe and the iDROPs. The iDROPs is the latest addition and can manage 250 bills (and tickets) at one time at a validation rate of up to six per second, making it ideal when players sit at a table with a large number of bills.

Live gaming tables and a great array of live gaming accessories, such as the Ball and Dice Tester and the Roulette Wheel Leveller with a leveling base will round off the Apex portfolio. The Shuffle King solutions will take a prominent position. Card shuffling plays a key role in casinos and here the Shuffle King 6 has made a strong impact as it can automatically shuffle up to six different decks of cards. The Shuffle King 2 is the single deck option.



QUIXANT

THE market leader in outsourced PC-based gaming hardware, associated proprietary software and cutting-edge display solutions, Quixant will bring its uniquely versatile portfolio to ICE for the 14th time in 2019.

An evolving ethos, which has progressed significantly since the rise to global prominence as a pioneering control board manufacturer, now focuses equally on both unparalleled product quality and the long-term benefits that differentiate Quixant from its competition. This combination is encapsulated within the company's Gaming Ecosystem, which will take centre stage in London.

QxVDR, a highly effective video decoding and rendering tool available to Quixant platform users, has been attracting great interest from both user-friendliness and financial perspectives. In tandem with this are QxATS, a unique tracing system, QxLED, introducing next-level light control and interactivity to the market, and QxBoot, which greatly reduces booting time and thus optimises machine profitability.

There are many other strings to the Gaming Ecosystem's bow, including free SAS 6.02 support for licensed customers, guaranteed product lifecycles and comprehensive regulatory compliance.

Naturally, there will also be strong focus on the product side, all of which is fully underpinned by the Ecosystem. The QXi-7000 and QMax-2 multi-screen 4K UHD platforms, powered by AMD's Ryzen Embedded APUs, stand at the pinnacle of Quixant's control board range and offer processing performance on an unprecedented scale.

Alongside these - among others - are the QXi-6000, a globally popular three-screen solution with Windows 7 support and an innovative fanless footprint, and QXi-400, the highest-powered two-screen controller on the market.

Over the past three years, Quixant has continued to develop its expertise as a designer and manufacturer of class-leading gaming displays and digital button decks. With a rapidly rising standing in this field, ICE 2019 will see the UK launch of the 27ins "floating" monitor line - a stylish, contemporary range that enables EGM manufacturers to catch the player's eye more than ever.

Complemented by bespoke button deck offerings which have been recently designed-in by major industry players, visitors to ICE can witness first-hand Quixant's increasing versatility as a one-stop gaming provider.

John Malin, global sales director at Quixant, said: "We're very proud of the strides we have made as a go-to gaming supplier. From our basis as a hardware manufacturer, we have added a display division which is currently experiencing remarkable growth and invested significant amounts in achieving, through our Gaming Ecosystem, what is arguably our fundamental objective: optimal profitability for all our customers."





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TCS JOHN HUXLEY

TCS John Huxley, the leader in research, development, services and innovation in the live gaming space, is pleased once again to be exhibiting at ICE London this February.

The company will be showcasing some new and exciting innovations in addition to its world renowned core products which have become industry benchmarks combining quality, innovation, reliability and security.

ICE sees the European debut of Blaze Craps which joins other Blaze products on show - Roulette and Money Wheel. Like all products in the suite, Blaze Craps features eye-catching energy efficient LED lights fitted below the surface of the gaming table which display unique attract sequences and custom-themed animations, while also highlighting winning numbers.

First launched at G2E in October, it has proved very popular with US operators and is expected to create similar interest in Europe. Not seen as often in this region as it can be difficult for novice players to grasp, Blaze Craps addresses these issues by highlighting winning numbers and light sequences to confirm various stages of the game, making it quick and easy for players to understand and for dealers and security staff to monitor the game.

A full range of TCS John Huxley number displays will be on show highlighting the new Ora display portfolio. The impressive Ora Grande features sleek curved lines incorporating a large 32ins screen that provides excellent visibility from multiple angles right across the gaming floor. Slimline LEDs border the frame profile to provide eye-catching attract modes that can cycle through multiple colour changes or can be integrated to display software to reflect key stages of the game.

Alongside this will be the striking Ora Glo with LEDs that surround the entire display frame that can cycle up to 12 different colours to identify trends or display attract modes and the Ora Luxe, which offers visually stunning frames incorporating laser cut designs with inset LEDs. Available in various sizes and suitable for all game types, there's a display for every operator's requirement.

Building great products has been the standard for TCS John Huxley since its inception and the next generation Chipper Champ Pro does not disappoint. This latest model has been developed to incorporate all the key attributes of the Chipper Champ 2, but packs a punch with even greater security and operational features that bring unbeatable benefits to the casino.

Also on show will be the world-renowned roulette wheel range featuring stunning designs, from unique veneers to vibrant eye-catching finishes, all exquisitely crafted with unbeatable security, durability and reliability built into every component.



DALLMEIER

MANY casino operators still struggle with undetected fraud and theft, high operating costs and inefficient, manual processes.

At the same time, business intelligence data is scarce and a huge potential for optimising business processes remains untapped. The Smart Casino Solutions system from industry pioneer Dallmeier promises a holistic approach to solve these challenges with an innovative combination of video technology and artificial intelligence. At ICE Dallmeier will showcase solutions for the three essential casino areas - gaming, surveillance and marketing.

Due to their analogue nature, classic table games such as blackjack were previously difficult to integrate into data processing and analysis. Dallmeier's Casino Automation Technology (CAT), the first gaming automation system that is live in a productive environment, uses AI technologies and standard full HD IP cameras to gather all sorts of data.

By doing so, CAT offers a wide variety of insights and automation of core gaming processes. The system recognises chips and cards, provides real-time information about bet position and bet value, game pace and float value, to name just a few key functionalities.

For the first time, this now allows for an accurate player rating, highly increased game pace and much more effective protection from fraud. CAT is available for baccarat and blackjack. CAT for blackjack will be showcased on fixed appointments only at ICE.

Furthermore, classic surveillance and CCTV also play a major role in casinos; large areas have to be monitored to protect guests, players, employees and the casino's inventory. With the new 360-degree version of the patented Panomera multifocal sensor system, casino operators can cover much larger areas with the same number of operators while at the same time significantly improving overall security due to high resolution, 360-degree view of the overall scene.

In case of an incident, operators can zoom into scenes like with a PTZ camera, but without losing the overall picture both in live and recording. Also, multiple operators can zoom in at the same time, resolving complex scenarios. All this reduces the cost for video security infrastructure enormously, leading to a significantly lower total cost of ownership.

The Smart Casino Solutions from Dallmeier are rounded off by their marketing aspect. By intelligently combining video technology-based functions such as people counting with AI-based gaming automation technologies and other analysis techniques, casinos can get access to a formerly hidden treasure of data.

Gathering, analysing and understanding this data helps casinos better plan their business and make more informed decisions based on the behaviour and preferences of their visitors and players.



AMATIC INDUSTRIES

AMATIC Industries is set to raise expectations with innovation at ICE.

Amatic is recognised as a multigame company with over 25 years of experience. All its games have been developed in-house - a policy that has enabled Amatic to set multigame standards in the global gaming industry.

Every year the company releases a multitude of new games to the industry in London and ICE 2019 will be no exception. Great care, detail, attention and focus have flowed into these games that promise to excite players with their new ideas, graphics and features. These are driven by the Hardrox platform to guarantee display excellence.

The company has always ensured that its multigames are housed in the most exquisite and secure cabinets possible. Style and elegance are the hallmarks of Amatic's gaming machines. There will be some brand new future-proof cabinets at the show.



As every year, the Amatic team will be there in force to give detailed information on the multigame solutions and new gaming machines.

Two other major pillars of Amatic Industries' business will also be housed on the stand - the Roulette Grand Jeu 24HX automated roulette and the Amanet online gaming solutions.

The reputation of the Roulette Grand Jeu 24HX speaks for itself. In Spain alone Amatic has sold more than 1,200 of these automated roulettes so far. The attention to design, quality, security and reliability is one reason for this success story.

In its standard version, the Grand Jeu provides space for up to eight players around the table. Each player has a gaming terminal equipped with a brilliant 24ins full HD monitor that provides all necessary statistics and graphics in pin-sharp quality for increased comfort. The Grand Jeu is also available in a flexible version with the Solitaire electronic roulette wheel and an individual number of connected satellite terminals.

Amanet online gaming remains the fastest growing pillar of Amatic's business. The combination of well-known land-based games and new games especially developed for the online market gives players an extensive choice. The number of jurisdictions that have approved Amanet games continues to rise. All games are in HTML5 format, meaning that they can be played on all possible devices.

SHOWPREVIEW.

GANLOT

AT the upcoming ICE London 2019, Ganlot will debut its first SAS module with a distinctive 5.7ins touch monitor.

Additionally, the company will exhibit its leading products in five sectors. In the gaming mixer output area, its GMO-1960 supports the latest HDMI 2.0 standard and high resolution up to 4K@60Hz. Notably, it combines video, audio and touch from a logic unit and a player tracking system and will present on only one single display of a slot machine. To fit every cabinet design it also provides an ergonomic utility to make it much easier for game developers to define the size and position of the slot game and player tracking content.

In the logic unit system area, Ganlot's systems, integrated with up-to-date Intel and AMD cores, are ready for the market. It also has GFS-1900, a stylish Mini-ITX system with an independent gaming I/O card. It's a system that will save a lot of effort in software development when customers plan to upgrade their logic core to a new generation.

In the logic unit board area, the proven Intel, AMD and ARM-based solutions are ready to team up with existing systems and there are three different form factors available - AIO, COM Express module and Mini-ITX. The company's board portfolio ranges from entry level to high-end design.

In the SAS area, Ganlot has three outstanding systems that are embedded with an independent patent IC to handle SAS protocol. What's more, a brand-new SAS module, GSM-1900, will be unveiled in London. It can be applied to current casino logic units and player tracking systems directly via USB cable and COM port.

Also a new device, GSD-57HCA, will be introduced; it's a unique 5.7ins touch monitor with HDMI and USB interface. It can be used simply as a touch monitor or be connected with a computer as a structural-separated player tracking system.

In the sports betting kiosk area, a prototypical sports betting kiosk will be displayed to showcase Ganlot's novel business model. "To stay ahead of the market, we have partnered with Kiosk Information System, which is one of the top three solution providers for self-service kiosks in the US, since early 2018," said the company. "Its successful experience in the kiosk area will be leveraged to develop a whole new collection for sports betting in the gaming field."

"Without doubt, Ganlot is the best choice for any game developers and system integrators who seek the latest logic unit with gaming functions or cutting-edge kiosk solutions to further optimise customer service."



ARUZE GAMING

ARUZE will be exhibiting its award-winning Muso Triple-27 for the first time at ICE London.

Muso Triple-27, Muso Curve-43, Muso Limited and Cube-X Innovator Deluxe will be on full display. Muso Triple-27 won the gold medal as the Best Slot Product in the 2018 Global Gaming Business Gaming and Technology Awards.

Featuring the industry's first wireless charging port, Muso Triple-27 creates a stunning light display in its LED backlighting that gives a 360-degree presence on the casino floor. An exciting way to attract players, Aruze created a sequential lighting feature that occurs on the back panel when the cabinets are connected to each other.

LED lighting continues behind the large 27ins monitors in edge lighting along the monitors themselves and even in the player's wrist rest.

Aruze expands the Muso family with Muso Curve-43 and Muso Limited, both launched at G2E



INTERBLOCK

ELECTRONIC table games manufacturer Interblock will exhibit its diverse, industry-leading multiplayer and multigame solutions at ICE.

Interblock EMEA president and board member Tomaz Zvipelj said: "We are very excited to be returning to ICE London, which is where we displayed the industry's first-ever ETG, Princess, in 1997. Our team has been exceeding our expectations in developing our innovative comprehensive product portfolio and we can't wait to share it with our partners at the show."

The highlight of Interblock's booth will be the breakthrough Universal Cabinet, which is a standalone unit with slot-like hardware designed to support a variety of games. Available in both video and automated formats, the product will demonstrate craps, roulette, blackjack and baccarat games and its ability to connect to external Interblock generators.

"Universal Cabinet is revolutionary to the gaming industry and will change the way a typical casino floor is configured."

Interblock's Diamond Stadium will be configured with three of its dealer assist tables delivering multi-hand blackjack, roulette and craps while also demonstrating its video options of multi-hand blackjack, baccarat, craps and roulette. The Diamond Stadium gives unlimited flexibility to operators and can accommodate any footprint while also connecting to external generators on the casino floor.

It delivers more hands per hour, with a variety of table game content available from one seat and has the ability to switch to an automated or video gaming space when live dealers are not present. The recently released tournament mode will also be active in the stadium, showing customers a fun and easy way to energise their floor during down times.

The award-winning StarBar bar top will demonstrate its ability to connect to the live stadium games. The StarBar allows players to interact with up to four different games simultaneously on one play station without having to cash out or change machines. A variety of games are available including craps, blackjack, multi-hand blackjack, roulette, video poker and more.

Interblock's bestselling product, MiniStar Roulette, will display its new ball-chasing light and sound package, which is designed to elevate the player experience. LED lights on the wheel combined with amplifying sound effects will chase the ball until it drops into a pocket.

The product delivers more than 80 results per hour and provides many of the features offered on Interblock's premium Diamond Roulette product line but in a smaller footprint. MiniStar Roulette is available with five, six, eight or 10 seats with a single or double zero roulette wheel.

Diamond Video Blackjack will feature an enhanced virtual dealer with fast-deal graphics that have reduced waiting time for participating players, resulting in more hands per hour. Each play station offers 27ins high definition screens.

The new Diamond Big Six Super Spin has all of the classic features of Big Six but with an added bonus. It is the industry's largest wheel and is fully automated. The double-sided wheel provides the flexibility to add play stations to one or both sides of the wheel and the wheel's face on both sides can be branded with the casino's logo.



CASH CRANE

The CASH CRANE is an attractive crane and fully equipped with environment-friendly RGB LED lighting. This means lower energy costs and a longer life for the lighting.

The modern look of this crane was obtained by the light-emitting facades combined with the white lacquered aluminium profiles.

The color of the crane changes during the status of the game, with is in sync with the colors on the big monitor in the back of the crane.

A casino style game is triggered while a result of the crane is gained

Operating cranes optimally and successfully has never been so easy due to the brand new control system using the latest technologies

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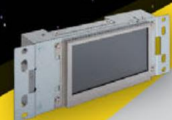


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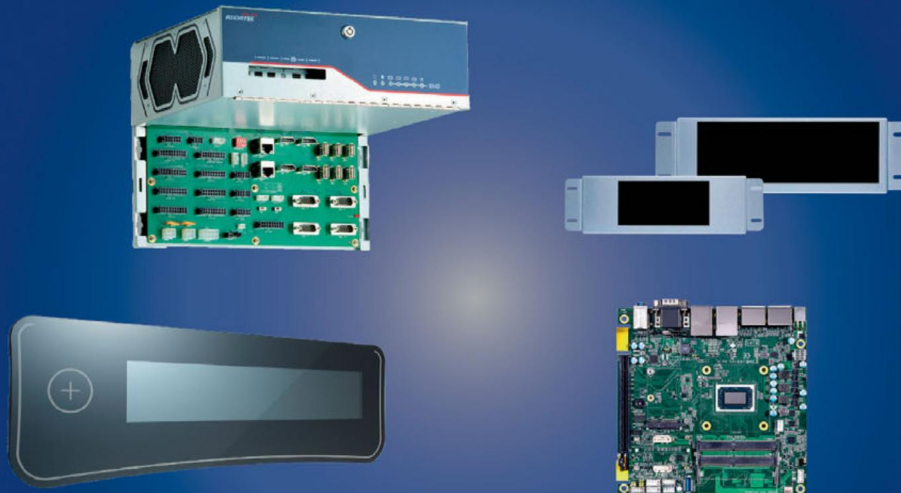
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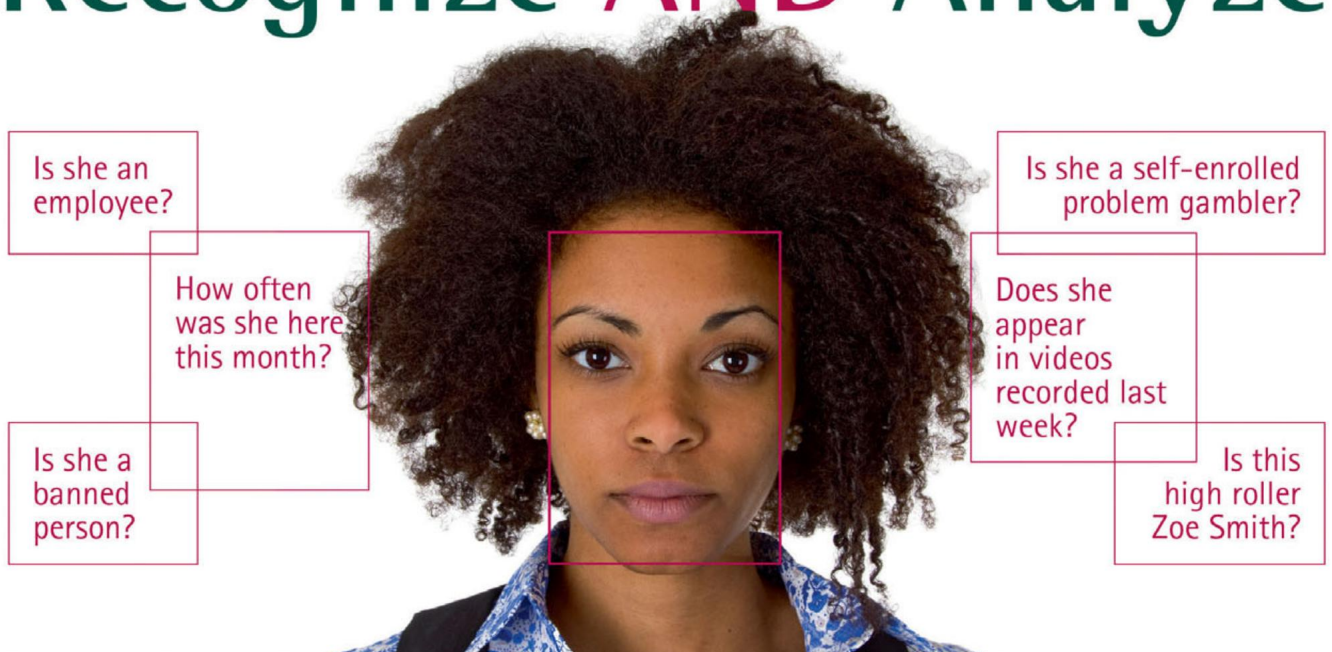


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IGT

ICE attendees can look forward to a diverse range of land-based and digital solutions for gaming and lottery within IGT's stand.

The company's multi-level progressive portfolio will be a highlight at the show. IGT will showcase the next titles within its diverse MLP library for the CrystalCurve cabinet. Golden Goddess, Star Stax and Dragon Lights will all be displayed on the cabinet's 43ins, curved 4k display.

The company will also showcase an array of exciting dual-screen MLPs on the CrystalDual 27 such as Hyper Hits and Fortune Link.

IGT will also demonstrate its meaningful progress in localising its core video content and in developing high-performing games. Dual-screen titles Solar Disc, Scarab and Mistress of Egypt will be among the most anticipated

IGT core games for the CrystalDual 27 and CrystalSlant cabinets.

The company will also introduce a range of core video titles for the single-display, 4K CrystalCurve cabinet such as Coin O'Mania, Golden Jungle Grand and Ocean Magic Grand. Market-attuned, low-line, high-volatility video games are additional must-see games on IGT's stand.

New, regionally relevant USwitch multigame bundles on the Crystal series cabinet and Diversity HD multigame bundles on the AXSIS 23/23 cabinet will be additional highlights within IGT's ICE portfolio.

The newly formed IGT PlayDigital organisation will showcase its new approach to digital and its ability to create accelerated growth for its customers and drive a faster pace of change via digital solutions. Among the many highlights within the IGT PlayDigital portfolio is the PlayShot sports betting solution.

The company will demonstrate why the versatile technology is already the leading B2B sports betting platform in the rapidly evolving US market and will introduce a range of self-service betting solutions including the PlayShot QuickBet kiosk, the revolutionary PlayShot Mobile Kiosk technology and the immersive CrystalBetting terminal to highlight the full capabilities of IGT's omni-channel sports betting offering. Exciting TRUE 4D games, Chill Gaming's skill-chance games, IGT Dynasty Electronic Table Games, systems technology, video poker, video lottery terminals and more will round out the display.



ARISTOCRAT

ARISTOCRAT Technologies is bringing a wide array of new products to ICE 2019, incorporating a mixture of popular brands, trending game mechanics and innovative developments in hardware and software design.

Erik van den Berg, vice-president of sales and business development for Aristocrat's casino interests in EMEA, said: "Our diverse portfolio strives to meet the broad range of needs across and within varied European, Middle Eastern and African markets."

"Our global design and development teams continue to build on previous successes with a balance of proven and brand-new maths models, imaginative ways of using renowned characters and stunning new methods of delivery to ensure our customers' gaming floors can continue to deliver for players across the region."

Following hugely successful introductions in North America and Australia, the Helix XT cabinet now begins its roll-out across selected EMEA markets, offering a premium-style housing for standard sale games. This upright cabinet displays portrait content on a 4K 42ins P-curve screen, complemented by an LCD topper and enhanced virtual button deck.

"Many new Aristocrat games are now being developed in both dual-screen and portrait formats, allowing operators even more flexibility in gaming floor presentation," explained Van den Berg. "And we have taken steps to ensure that this new cabinet form factor is well supported with a proven game library from launch."

Aristocrat's new range of C-Series core games offers outstanding diversity. Brand extensions of some of the most popular characters include Buffalo Max and 5 Dragons Gold Max, with extended free game selections and scaling volatility.

The company is also launching inspired new concepts in the J-Series for those who love jackpots. Innovations in the E-Series collection of entertainment games will include two new Mighty Cash games, Vegas Wins and Outback Bucks, with a reveal symbol unveiling jackpot awards on completion of the feature.

Aristocrat is also showcasing more M-Series multigame and multi-reel-set ingenuity, including Wonder 4 Boost, an extension to the Wonder 4 series, hosting highly popular titles Buffalo, Wild Ameri'Coins, Rhino Charge and Whales of Cash and offering a bonus boost of up to eight concurrent reel sets and extreme free games.

Van den Berg concluded: "We continue with the theme 'It's all about what's inside' at ICE 2019, reflecting a sharp focus on innovation, people and products and we look forward to sharing our vision of 'what's next' with our valued partners and stakeholders."



G-DIGITAL

G-DIGITAL, the digital signage expert from Slovenia, will be returning to ICE to demonstrate how it can help operators make the most from their information screens.

"Digital signage can be found practically everywhere at a casino or gaming location," said company chief Ljubo Benko. "It can be underestimated how important this is for the gaming operator. Digital signage opens the door to communicate clearly and effectively with customers in a number of ways."

"These can be directly on the gaming floor, such as roulette or jackpot information, or placed throughout the gaming location to inform players about a whole world of things - from what's available at the casino restaurant to things to do nearby."

"Thus, when used effectively, a screen is a marketing tool, allowing the operator to inform the player. Naturally, it can also include advertising - one's own or from other companies - so becoming a new revenue stream."

Benko is an industry veteran with many years of experience. He has held major positions at the most important casino operator in Slovenia and founded the digital signage section at G-Digital in 2008. "We have over



10 years of experience in digital signage. Our software has evolved a long way. That's why we decided to invest last year to exhibit for the first time at ICE. We have digital signage that makes a difference and we can support operators around the world.

"Casino operators are very busy people and we know from experience that digital signage can only work well if it is simple to understand and, more importantly, simple to use on a day-to-day basis. That explains the difference G-Digital makes. It is deployed on a central database - that means that changes can be made to as many monitors as required at the push of a button."

"There is no need to program a change on a USB stick and walk from monitor to monitor to make the change. This saves time and money. Changes can be made quickly and effectively. Images can be simply integrated into the screen - so the image shown to the player can be customised. This also includes the game screens - they no longer need to show only the game information. A part of the screen can be reserved for another information channel - making these screens marketing tools as well."

"Digital signage is so much more than an information tool. Yet we know it will only be used when the customer can confidently work with it each and every day. That explains the success of our company."

SHOWPREVIEW.

KONAMI GAMING

KONAMI Gaming will have a strong showcase of new game series and slot at ICE London.

More than 30,000 guests will have the chance to experience Konami's leading progressive game offerings and single-screen releases for Concerto Crescent and Stack. Money Galaxy, Agent: Magnifying Jackpots, Magician's Charm and Sparkling Roses: Color Bloom will be among the top series featured for the first time.

In addition, this year marks the ICE premiere of Konami's newest slot cabinets: KX 43 and Concerto Opus. Both have 4K Ultra HD displays and an exciting mix of debut game titles.

"This year at ICE guests will discover a record variety of single-screen releases for Konami's curved Crescent and tall Stack cabinets, backed by top-performing play mechanics from symbol-driven links to Strike Zone," said Eduardo Aching, vice president, international gaming operations.

"In addition to showing exceptional results across diverse markets, Konami's library of single-screen content offers flexible configuration options for multi-denom, multi-currency and multigame."

Agent: Magnifying Jackpots and Inspector: Sign of the Jackpots are among the featured Strike Zone titles for Crescent and Stack. Throughout game play, players have the option to activate additional reel areas for expanding full-reels wilds and higher jackpot odds by increasing their selected Strike Zone at higher extra bet amounts.

In addition to multi-denom and multi-currency options, this standalone jackpot series is SeleXion multigame compatible. Star Watch is another popular Strike Zone series featured on the floor of this year's show, with standalone progressive jackpots and instant symbol-driven credit prize awards.

"Continuing the success of Smash Smash Festival, Konami's ICE 2019 line-up includes five new linked progressive jackpot games for dual-screen Concerto upright and Slant," said Aching. "All feature original math and mechanics, from pick 'em progressives to Stay & Spin instant credit prizes."

Symbol-driven linked progressives Money Galaxy and Thunder Arrow are among the debut series for Konami's Stay & Spin feature. Both will be showcased on the Concerto upright and provide players the chance at multi-round credit collect bonuses throughout game play.

Guests will also discover SeleXion-compatible linked progressives Magician's Charm and Power Boost Inferno. Similar to Smash Smash Festival, these jackpot games can combine with a mix of popular Konami base games, including Chili Chili Fire, Dragon's Law Twin Fever and Lion Carnival.

This year marks the ICE debut of Konami's 43ins screen KX 43 and 65ins screen Concerto Opus cabinets, with 4K Ultra HD. Both machines offer a relaxed slant top, dual spin buttons, dual cup holders and an exceptional 4K game library. Concerto Opus is a large-screen video slot cabinet, for comfortable enjoyment by players and pairs. KX 43 is a new cabinet type from Konami, with a standard base width and edge lighting effects that extend from the topper to the floor.



CASINO TECHNOLOGY

CASINO Technology will launch new high-end cabinets and new multigames at ICE London.

The latest product offerings include new additions to the award-winning EZ Modulo series of slot machines - the EZ ModuloTitan and EZ Modulo Tower.

Rossi McKee, vice president of Casino Technology, commented: "Our new offerings comprise of leading-edge technology and brand-new content for truly exciting experiences. Our dedication to offer the most comprehensive products that meet customers' expectations is defining the company's participation at ICE."

The innovative Titan grabs the player's attention and generates excellent results for operators. Featuring a 32ins HD main monitor and a 43ins UHD J-curved monitor for displaying the jackpot accumulations and the winning celebrations, the cabinet offers superior ergonomics and improved player comfort.

The black chrome finish of the button deck gives a sense of sophisticated style and design. The Titan is offered with Gorilla Wheel, a multi-level progressive game suite with 12 titles and Speed King multigame with up to 60 games.

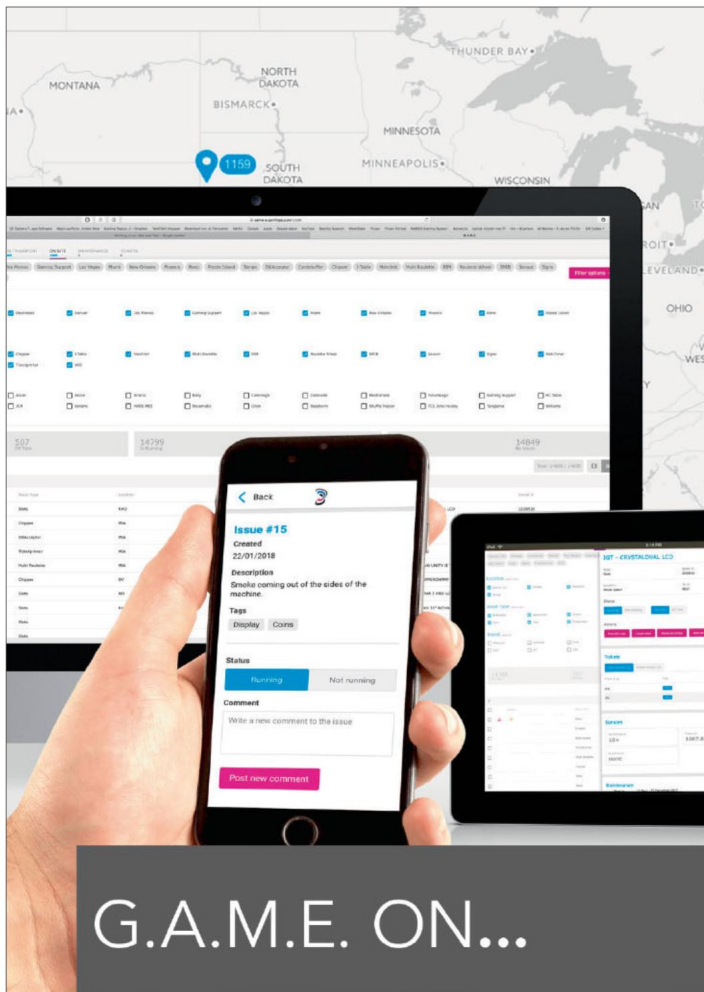
The new EZ Modulo Tower stands out with a unique 43ins J-curved monitor and full touchscreen capabilities, crystal clear sound and edge lighting as well as a 27ins topper. It is offered with Tower 102 fruits and Tower 104 multigames, consisting of 40 successful games, guaranteeing maximum machine occupancy.

Specially designed for markets preferring slant-top cabinets is the Challenger with classic shapes and uncompromised quality. With full HD monitors and large button deck or optional 15ins iDeck, designed for easy maintenance, the new cabinet is offered with the Gamopolis Speedway series of multigames and the new progressive multigame Clover Charm. The latter is the latest addition to the company's multilevel progressive line of game suites. Consisting of five games - three fruit themed and two with special Hyper mode featuring additional betting lines - it aims to maximise excitement.

A specialised online corner will showcase the company's digital offerings with Neon Games at the centerpiece. The powerful list of HTML5 titles, launched just recently by Casino Technology Interactive, has an improved fast and responsive interface. Neon Games are available through the company's Elephant remote game server.

The award-winning white label Leopard online gaming platform will also be on display. The platform allows operators to deliver a customised player experience that is dynamically in compliance with the changing market requirements. "The platform gives both operators and players the opportunity to choose between all betting verticals, integrated into a single casino lobby and wallet," said product lead at Casino Technology Interactive Lachezar Petrov.

Rossi McKee concluded: "Our focus is on the customers. Through the company's 20 years of history we have forged a lot of loyal relationships and with our great team of professionals we continue to build on the foundations created since the establishment of the company."



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SUZOHAPP

SUZOHAPP, a leading technology company with over 50,000 gaming, amusement, sport betting, lottery and bingo products for casino operators and gaming OEMs, will showcase a comprehensive offering of components and solutions for gaming, amusement, sport betting, lottery and bingo applications.

This includes, but is not limited to, LCD monitors featuring excellent brands, such as Elo Touch Solutions and SuzoHapp's VisionPro, in addition to a rich selection of cabinet parts, such as bill validators, printers, coin mechanisms, LCD button decks, pushbuttons, barcode scanners, locks, toppers and more.

Additionally, SuzoHapp is a leading software and hardware supplier of complete cash management solutions typically found anywhere from cashier cages to large-scale back office operations. At this year's ICE, the company will model a cashier's cage demonstration and present a rich selection of cash management solutions coupled with its CashComplete Connect monitoring software.

SuzoHapp's booth will feature three main themes for its visitors: OEM casino components, sports betting components and the cash handling components and solutions for the cashier cage and back office.

The following products will be on display: an extensive range of customisable monitors for OEMs, casinos, signages, bingo and lottery (as a major highlight, the firm will be showcasing its new VisionPro edge-lit LED touch and non-touch monitors as well as the Elo Touch Solutions open-frame gaming monitors); Nanoptix printers; Newland barcode scanners; Giussani locks, including the new E-PRL reprogrammable lock; toppers and tower lights; pushbuttons and LCD button decks, including the new DPS (Dynamic Panel Systems); coin and bill validators and recyclers; hoppers; a broad selection of cabinet parts (speakers, power supplies, USB chargers and more); and cash handling solutions (CashComplete SDS-35 smart deposit solution, CashComplete RCS-400 and RCS-500 recycling cash systems, Scan Coin ICX Active-9 coin sorter, Scan Coin SC-8220 note counter and Comestero change machines).



"We are a one-stop shop with the world's largest offering in the gaming and amusement industry," said Goran Sovilj, executive vice president gaming and amusement, Europe. "We are the only global company providing a complete range of components for casino and sports betting applications. Simplify your sourcing is the message we want to get across and at this year's ICE we will demonstrate how we are the ideal partner for all OEMs and casino operators."

JCM GLOBAL

JCM Global will showcase a wealth of leading and patented products with a strong blend of bill validation, printing and system solutions.

Leading JCM's display will be its landmark and award-winning iVIZION bill validator. Its powerful blend of high security, high acceptance rate and high customer satisfaction are all reasons why JCM has sold more than 400,000 iVIZION units to casinos of all sizes worldwide.

JCM will also show its new MRX modular banknote recycler. MRX is ideal for a wide range of payment terminal types and was created for ultimate flexibility because it allows operators to select the number of cassettes they need for each individual application. It processes notes at two notes per second and has a 15-note escrow for fast returns.

Other JCM bill validators on display will be the UBA, iPRO-RC, VEGA, TBV and the Fujitsu F53/F56. JCM's GEN5 thermal printer is the better, smarter, faster printing solution. With its fast CPU and print speed, it has the flexibility to print TITO and promotional tickets, as well as various wager tickets and templated promotional coupons.

JCM's proven TBV series has become a standard in table solutions because it is compatible with products from various manufacturers. It works in concert with GEN5 and easily connects to the TBX+ software. When paired with iVIZION and GEN5, JCM's patented technology FUZION contains many features that enable casinos to operate more securely and efficiently.

JCM will show FUZION v1.0 and its advanced features include: security monitoring (money laundering and suspicious activities are detected in real time, and alerts can be sent through email, text, or logged in FUZION); health performance reporting (monitoring of which devices have errors, how well each unit is performing, tracking of paper usage and cashbox fullness); transaction database (every transaction is recorded and associated to a time stamp, serial number and high-resolution bill or ticket image); remote firmware updates (firmware for JCM's GEN5 thermal printer and iVIZION bill validator can be scheduled and automatically installed at set times); iPromo system-driven printing (GEN5 printers can now be used for printing different forms such as W2G tax forms, promotional).

Ticket2Go is one of JCM's most popular products with operators and is a leading ticketing solution in the UK. Now JCM is enhancing the solution with e-wallet functionality. Operators can give their customers the new payment type they demand by easily adding e-wallet functionality to Ticket2Go using the existing JCM system solution - no third-party software required.

Other JCM systems on display will be PromoNet, a floor-wide promotional couponing system, and ICB 4.0 where its intelligent cash box and live web reporting offer real-time health monitoring data and predictive drop and maintenance scheduling to dramatically increase operational efficiency.



PROMATIC GROUP

PROMATIC Group is heading to the world's biggest betting, casino and igaming event in February with more products and services than ever before.

"We're very excited to be back at ICE in 2019, this time with a few new brands and products in our portfolio," said Pawel Paliwoda, the company's CEO. "We have always stayed true to our core products and partners, while expanding our market opportunities globally. As our brand continues to grow, it is a natural process to expand to other regions and to develop new products. And ICE is always a great place to show how we evolved over the last year."

This year Promatic Group will be expanding its offer of cabinets, slot games, jackpot systems and system solutions. The company's representatives will be featuring a brand new cabinet - Casino 24. Next, Promatic's popular multigame collections will be presented with some new titles on historical slot game Hussars. This game's scenery, graphics and great sound effects take players into the world of the most famous cavalry - the Winged Hussars of Poland.

But the biggest part of Promatic's new offer will be the new online games platform, www.promaticgames.com, providing a full range of superior online gaming solutions for igaming operators, platforms and aggregators. Last but by no means least, Promatic's new branded game, Pudzianator by Mariusz Pudzianowski, will have its premiere at the show. The game features five-



times World's Strongest Man champion and current MMA fighter, who will be Promatic's special guest at the stand.

"ICE is always exciting for us but this year has to be our most anticipated event ever," concludes Paliwoda. "With our expanded offer, fully focusing on providing a complete portfolio of products and system solutions, as well as having Mariusz Pudzianowski as a special guest, our stand is a must visit for everyone. We are really looking forward to this year's exhibition."

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EGT

EGT, EGT Multiplayer and EGT Interactive will share "gaming's spirit of genius" at ICE 2019.

Over 260 gaming stations will be on show. Three jackpots will reveal their themes for the first time at the show. Jackpot Cards is based on brand new slot cabinets and on already proven EGT jackpots. Three brand new LED dual-sided jackpot panels of different sizes and design have been especially created for Jackpot Cards. The Ancient Spin jackpot will take players to the realm of ancient Egypt. Ancient Spin is accommodated in the company's curved cabinets that project the jackpot's values on a 42ins Rainbow panel.

The Sands Princess jackpot's main game, Pharaoh's Desert, may end with one of the five stand-alone or linked jackpot levels. This product adds value for operators, being housed in the high performing P-24/24 Up, P-27/27 St, P-27/27 St Slim and P-27/32H St cabinets and having the Rainbow jackpot panel.

The Exciter III platform, part of the General series, has frameless monitors with impeccable visual quality, convenient keyboard with dynamic touch display, crystal clear stereo sound and easy maintenance. The included multimedia chair justifies the "VIP" claim of the product, incorporating stereo speakers and control buttons for the sound volume and the main functions of the game.

The General series' debut will be completed with four more slot models. The G 27-32 Up and St cabinets feature a 27ins high-resolution main and 32ins upper widescreen monitors (with an option for a 32ins topper), while the G 27-27 Up and St cabinets have all their displays and toppers in 27ins size. EGT Multiplayer has set the course for its future developments with the latest T-Line and S-Line series models. The core of the new T86 touch table roulette with six gaming places is the larger main display (86ins). Compared to its predecessors, the next generation monitor is faster and with higher resolution. T86 may be connected to a live or automated roulette wheel. This structural improvement enables the operators to link up to 40 tables to one wheel on their gaming floor.

The S32/55 is the latest EGT Multiplayer terminal. Above its 32ins main touchscreen monitor stands an impressive 55ins vertical display that will beam 4K images - the best resolution in the industry. The already known S32/32/27 and S32/32/32 terminals have also been facelifted - their third monitor is no longer tilted and, along with the ticket printer and bill acceptor devices, they also support coin acceptors and hoppers.

EGT Interactive will show its new virtual roulette - a mutual project with EGT Multiplayer. It brings the offline and online entertainment together in an original manner, as the players may choose to bet on the physical wheel, or may easily switch to the internet version of the game, visualised on a tablet. The year ahead will be ambitious for the company, as it is on its way to increase its market share in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden and Latin America.

The Spider CMS team has lately increased its "web" of installations and currently it includes Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Romania, Georgia, Belarus and - very soon - Tanzania. The recently developed Report Module takes care of the detailed statistics, covering all important business data (revenue, most played denominations and games, cabinets, manufacturers, etc.). The Vault Module will please the operators with its real-time cash balance that supports multiple cage sessions.

It also includes a Redemption Machine Manager that enables the users to connect that type of kiosk to the system and features a manual and automated bill stacker clearance functionality. The Spider Streamer Application makes possible the live streaming of different events organised in the casino.





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Fantini Index

THE Fantini Interactive Index is computed based on the month-end stock price (adjusted for dividends and splits) of each company and weighted based on approximation of market capitalisation.

Market capitalisations for companies trading on foreign exchanges have been converted to US dollars for comparability purposes.

Fantini's Interactive Index is based on a 100-point value as of December 2011.

Frank Fantini produces Fantini's Gaming Report, a daily update for the gaming industry. For all the latest gaming data from Fantini Research visit www.fantiniresearch.com

World Index 103.31	Dec-18 -5.82%	Full Year -33.81%
888	5.71%	-41.27%
ARISTOCRAT	-11.27%	-16.79%
BOYD	-16.28%	-40.71%
CROWN	-2.57%	-17.75%
EVERI	-23.36%	-31.70%
GENTING-MALAYSIA	7.35%	-47.10%
GENTING-SINGAPORE	0.00%	-27.55%
IGT	-14.99%	-44.81%
INTRALOT	-12.50%	-63.70%
LAS VEGAS SANDS	-5.26%	-25.10%
MELCO RESORTS	-2.49%	-39.33%
MGM RESORTS	-10.01%	-27.34%
NAGACORP	0.00%	40.26%
PADDY POWER BETFAIR	-9.01%	-31.50%
PENN NATIONAL	-14.83%	-39.90%
PLAYTECH	-14.06%	-57.70%
RANK	-13.79%	-45.99%
SCIENTIFIC GAMES	-8.21%	-65.15%
SJM HOLDINGS	3.33%	3.33%
TABCORP	-3.82%	-30.57%
UNIVERSAL ENTERTAINMENT	-12.40%	-21.40%
WILLIAM HILL	-4.83%	-54.50%
WYNN RESORTS	-9.59%	-41.33%

AGEM Index For all the latest gaming data from the Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers visit www.agem.org

AGEM	Exchange: Symbol (Currency)	Stock Price At Month End			Percent Change		Index Contribution
		Dec-18	Nov-18	Dec-17	Prior Period	Prior Year	
Agilysys	Nasdaq: AGYS (US\$)	14.34	16.49	12.28	(13.04) U	16.78 U	(0.73)
Ainsworth Game Technology	ASX: AGI (AU\$)	0.80	0.76	2.16	5.26 U	(62.96) U	0.05
Aristocrat Leisure Limited	ASX: ALL (AU\$)	21.84	23.40	23.70	(6.67) U	(7.85) U	(16.23)
Astro Corp.	Taiwan: 3064 (NT\$)	27.90	27.75	13.50	0.54 U	106.67 U	0.02
Crane Co.	NYSE: CR (US\$)	72.18	86.37	89.22	(16.43) U	(19.10) U	(11.70)
Everi Holdings Inc.	NYSE: EVRI (US\$)	5.15	6.72	7.54	(23.36) U	(31.70) U	(1.40)
Galaxy Gaming Inc.	OTCMKTS: GLXZ (US\$)	1.41	1.48	1.20	(4.73) U	17.50 U	(0.04)
Gaming Partners International	Nasdaq: GPIC (US\$)	13.00	12.95	11.24	0.39 U	15.66 U	0.01
Inspired Entertainment, Inc.	Nasdaq: INSE (US\$)	4.80	5.40	9.80	(11.11) U	(51.02) U	(0.18)
International Game Technology PLC	NYSE: IGT (US\$)	14.63	17.21	26.51	(14.99) U	(44.81) U	(7.43)
Konami Corp.	TYO: 9766 (¥)	4,805	5,080	6,200	(5.41) U	(22.50) U	(2.03)
PlayAGS Inc. ¹	NYSE: AGS (US\$)	23.00	22.45	-	2.45 U	-	0.33
Scientific Games Corporation	Nasdaq: SGMS (US\$)	17.88	19.48	51.30	(8.21) U	(65.15) U	(2.24)
Transact Technologies	Nasdaq: TACT (US\$)	8.98	10.30	13.25	(12.82) U	(32.23) U	(0.14)
Change in Index Value							(41.73)
AGEM Index Value: November 2018							444.24
AGEM Index Value: December 2018							402.51

1. There is no Prior Year data for PlayAGS Inc. because the stock began trading in January 2018.

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With the approval of the operation of 16 online gaming platforms in Colombia, in which there are currently registered a total of 1,695,614 people, 33 billion pesos have been collected in taxation, contributing to the health of the country. In total, bets made to October 2018 reached approximately 500 billion pesos (US\$161,300,322). To date there are 2,627 casinos and gambling halls authorised in the country. Gambling represents around 1.5 per cent of Colombia's total GDP.

FEBRUARY

5-7

ICE London 2019, ExCeL London Exhibition Centre, London, UK.

www.icelondon.uk.com

24-26

6th Annual Tribal General Managers & Casino Executive Exchange, Talking Stick Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona, US.

www.nativenationevents.org

26-28

GRWA Brisbane Edition - Gaming, Racing & Wagering Australia, W Brisbane Hotel, Brisbane, Australia.

www.GamingDownUnder.com

MARCH

5-6

Irish Gaming Show 2019, Dublin, Ireland.

www.irishgaming.ie

12

Prague Gaming Summit – PGS 2019, Vienna House Andel's Prague, Czech Republic.

www.praguegamingsummit.com

19-21

ASEAN Gaming Summit 2019, Manila, Philippines.

www.aseangaming.com

25-26

BiG Africa Super Show 2019, Emperors Palace, Johannesburg, South Africa.

www.bigafricasummit.com

28-29

CGS 2019 - Caribbean Gaming Show & Summit, Iberostar Hotel & Resort, Cancun, Mexico.

www.cgssummit.com

APRIL

1-4

Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention 2019, San Diego Convention Center, California, US.

www.indiangamingtradeshow.com

9-10

Feria Internacional del Juego 2019 (Int'l Gaming & Gambling Trade Show), Hall 3, Feria de Madrid (IFEMA), Madrid, Spain.

www.feriainternacionaldeljuego.com

9-10

Gambling Strategies US – Technology, Security & Regulation 2019, Atlantic City, New Jersey, US.

www.arena-international.com/gamblingusa/

10-11

FADJA Colombia 2018, Bogota, Colombia.

www.fadja.com

29-30

12th Annual Tribal Casino & Hotel Development Conference (TCHD), Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino, Maricopa, Arizona, US.

www.nativenationevents.org

MAY

7-9

Southern Gaming Summit 2019, Mississippi Gulf Coast, Mississippi, US.

www.sgssummit.com

9

Mare Balticum 2 – Baltic & Scandinavian Gaming Summit 2019, Radisson Blu Royal Astorija Hotel, Vilnius, Lithuania.

www.marebalticumgaming.com

13-15

ICE North America, Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Boston, Massachusetts, US.

www.icenorthamerica.com

16-17

JgC 2019 - Japan Gaming Congress, Tokyo, Japan.

www.japangamingcongress.com

20-21

Cyprus Gaming Show 2019, Hilton Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus.

www.cyprusgamingshow.com

**AS DATES /VENUES SOMETIMES CHANGE, PLEASE CHECK WITH ORGANISERS BEFORE VISITING SHOWS.*

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STOP THE PRESS

/// The ICE London show at the ExCel exhibition centre in Docklands (February 5-7), has broken the 600-exhibitor barrier for the first time. The latest figure is 612 exhibitors from 66 countries, an increase on the 589 exhibitors from 65 countries last year. The show this year occupies 38 of the 44 halls - two more than 2018 - at ExCel. Clarion Gaming managing director Kate Chambers said: "The starting point for any exhibition is its exhibitors: great exhibitors attract serious buyers and the more buyers you can attract, the more exhibitors are interested in your event."

/// For the third consecutive year Las Vegas Sands has been named one of The World's Most Admired Companies in Fortune magazine's annual list of the most respected businesses. The company has made the list six times in the past seven years and Sheldon Adelson, chairman and CEO, said: "Being recognised for the third year in a row is not only an honour but a testament to our team members' unwavering commitment to deliver on our company's plans and programmes." Las Vegas Sands is the largest global developer and operator of integrated resorts.

/// Samuel Wetzler has been named the new regional director for the Portland area by the US National Indian Gaming Commission. He takes over from the retiring Mark Philips. Wetzler has been with the agency since February of 2017 as compliance officer for Portland. He will be responsible for technical assistance, training and compliance at 53 Indian gaming facilities owned and operated by 48 federally recognised tribes in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

/// Aruze Gaming America and PDS Gaming, a finance and lease company that specialises in customised financing solutions, have entered into a multi-year revolving credit facility agreement. Aruze will utilise the proceeds from this for general operational purposes and towards its continued investment in R&D and production of its industry-leading gaming equipment. Rob Ziems, president of Aruze, said: "PDS is a vital partner of Aruze. We are excited to continue our relationship with them for years to come."

/// The Indian state of Meghalaya wants to open a casino in the eastern district of Byrnihat, the Shillong Times reported. The idea is still only in the planning stage, though the government would be looking to model the casino after those in Nepal and Sikkim, where locals are forbidden to enter. Casinos are only legal in India in Goa, Daman, Diu and Sikkim.

/// The Philippine Gaming and Amusement Corp expects gross gambling revenue in the country to gain 8.5 per cent to PHP217bn (US\$4.1bn) in 2019, Reuters reports. The country saw a 13 per cent gain in GGR in 2018 to about PHP200bn, PAGCOR chair Andrea Domingo told the news agency. The Philippines is fast approaching Singapore as Asia's second-largest gaming market. The company has seen strong growth from VIP gaming, though expects greater competition from around the region in the future, she said.

/// Portugal's land-based casino sector recorded growth in 2018, despite intensifying competition from online gambling and lottery products, recently released revenue stats show. The country's land-based casinos generated overall revenue of €318m last year, a figure representing a 3.1 per cent increase on 2017. Growing demand for slot machine games at the facilities drove the growth in the land-based casino space, it was reported.

/// SuzoHapp and Castles Technology International, a globally recognised manufacturer of payment hardware solutions, have entered into a multi-year partnership agreement that includes the co-development and delivery of next-generation cashless terminals within unique sales channels throughout the global unattended marketplace. This strategic partnership enables SuzoHapp to white label and resell Castles' family of cashless payment hardware solutions bundled with its services. The result is that each company's business partners obtain cashless payment hardware solutions that are backed with the highest levels of PCI and EMV compliance, lower their overhead costs, capture new revenue streams and empower their end users with independence and flexibility.

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PHIL CLEGG

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



No ICE surprise

THE news that the number of exhibitors booked in for this month's ICE London has topped 600 for the first time hardly comes as a big surprise.

The event has been growing continuously over recent years, so much so that it now threatens to outgrow the huge ExCeL exhibition complex (this year it will occupy 38 of the venue's 44 halls).

However, perhaps the most startling statistic released recently by organiser Clarion Gaming is the fact that the show has more than doubled in size over the last seven years (from 22,500sq.m in 2012 to 45,500sq.m in 2019).

This growth can only be described as phenomenal - that's a chronically overused word, but not in this case. The expansion of ICE has thoroughly justified Clarion's strategy of expanding the verticals.

Sometimes when you try to cover all the bases you end up spreading yourself too thinly, becoming the proverbial "jack of all trades and master of none." That does not apply to ICE London because each vertical has been carefully enhanced and afforded due respect and attention.

The result, as I have said many times before, is the greatest gaming show on earth.

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Former Nevada Governor joins MGM...

MGM Resorts International has appointed former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval as president of global gaming development.

Sandoval will drive MGM Resorts' global expansion efforts, most importantly in Japan, and focus on state public policy efforts around sports gaming, while solidifying the company's leadership in the growing sports betting market.

MGM Resorts president Bill Hornbuckle will now lead global casino marketing and



be responsible for leveraging the company's worldwide assets and reputation to drive revenue growth. Hornbuckle's marketing focus will also help drive the company's overall growth in Macau.

"Few leaders are as widely respected, accomplished and knowledgeable as Brian Sandoval and we couldn't be more excited to have him as part of the MGM family," said MGM Resorts chairman and CEO Jim Murren. "He brings an unparalleled level of skill, leadership and experience to the company and we will benefit greatly from his in-depth expertise in gaming, public policy and economic development."

"As I return to the private sector for the first time in over 20 years, finding the right professional opportunity to best suit my experience was important to me," said Sandoval. "MGM Resorts is a global leader and I look forward to joining the team led by Jim Murren, someone who I greatly respect."

...as MGM Resorts adds to board

MGM Resorts International has appointed Keith A Meister to the board of directors.

With this appointment, the board has been expanded from 12 to 13 directors. Meister is managing partner and chief investment officer of Corvex Management, which owns approximately three per cent of MGM's outstanding shares.

Meister has extensive boardroom experience and previously served as a director on the boards of Yum! Brands, The Williams Companies, ADT Corporation, Ralcorp

Holdings, Motorola and American Casino and Entertainment Properties, among others.

Jim Murren, chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts, said: "We are pleased to invite Keith onto the board as our newest independent director. As a significant shareholder in our company, we have been engaged in constructive dialogue over the last several months and are aligned on our strategy to increase free cash flow, continue to pursue an asset light model, drive margin improvement and position the company for long-term future growth."

Wynn wins Malaysian court case

A MALAYSIAN judge last month ruled in favour of Wynn Macau in a case against a fund manager who owed the casino millions of dollars.

The company's lawyer said that this was the first time a casino has been allowed to recover dues in the country.

Wagering or gaming contracts are not

recognised in Malaysia, which means casinos do not have legal recourse for the gambling dues owed to them by their clients.

But in the Wynn case against the Malaysian fund manager, the casino's lawyers said they weren't seeking dues from a wagering contract but from a credit agreement that the Malaysian had failed to honour.



Major changes for Genting Poker Series

GENTING UK - one of the UK's leading casino groups - has announced the dates for the 2019 Genting Poker Series.

In 2019 there will be major changes to the tournaments, that are all designed to enhance the players' poker experience. Now entering its eighth year, the Genting Poker Series will feature 17 events across the country, including 13 mini events and four main events, which will be open to players of all abilities and no qualification is required.

The main events will be held at Resorts World Birmingham, Luton, Liverpool Queen Square and Edinburgh Fountain Park. There is a guaranteed prize pool of £100,000 at each main event. The mini events, which will be returning to venues that include Westcliff in Essex, Newcastle and Reading, will see players compete for a guaranteed prize pool of £35,000 and nine Genting Poker Series main event seats.

In response to player feedback, Genting UK has introduced a button ante structure across all the events in 2019. When a button ante is used, the player on the button will pay the ante for the entire table which, as a result, speeds up the play for all involved. The Genting UK Poker Series is the only national UK poker tour to adopt this format.

Vietnam casino first phase ready by year end

THE first phase of a multi-billion US dollar casino resort on Vietnam's central coast is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

As part of the first phase of the Hoiana gaming resort, two towers will provide 270 units of condominium and hotel space. These facilities will be branded as Hoiana Residence and will be sold before completion of the construction, according to junket firm Suncity Group, which is behind the project.



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Ocean Resort to go back on the market?

OCEAN Resort in Atlantic City, US, the former Revel, could be headed back to the market.

In a suit over his removal from Ocean, former HQ2 nightclub manager Joe Morrissey claimed majority owner Bruce Deifik is trying to sell the casino and wants to cut out anyone with ownership interests that could thwart the sale.

Deifik bought the property for \$200m and reopened it in June last year, the same day the Hard Rock Atlantic City opened. Ocean has ranked last in Atlantic City gaming revenue in four out of the first five months since its opening.

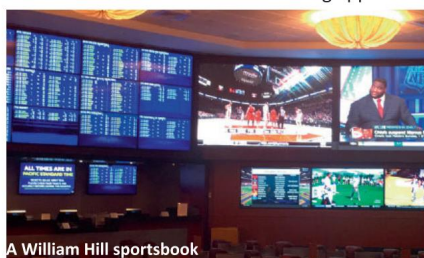
Source: Fantini's Gaming Report



Major Nevada sportsbook step for William Hill

INTERNATIONAL sportsbook operator William Hill has taken a major step in its Nevada growth strategy, winning unanimous recommendations of approval for licensing at seven properties at both ends of the state.

In three separate actions, the state Gaming Control Board recommended licensing approval



A William Hill sportsbook

for race and sportsbooks at Jerry's Nugget in North Las Vegas, four properties in Las Vegas and Laughlin under Golden Entertainment and two in Reno and Stateline under Eldorado Resorts.

The approval in the Eldorado licensing included amending orders of registration involving the company's plan to acquire 20 per cent of William Hill US. William Hill already operates sportsbooks at downtown Reno's Eldorado and Stateline's Montbleu properties, but the change in status requires new licensing.

William Hill US CEO Joe Asher said once final approval is granted, the company would manage race and sportsbooks at the Stratosphere, Arizona Charlie's Decatur and Arizona Charlie's Boulder in Las Vegas, as well as Aquarius in Laughlin.

Hard Rock's Hokkaido master plan

HARD Rock International has presented its master plan for Hokkaido in Japan.

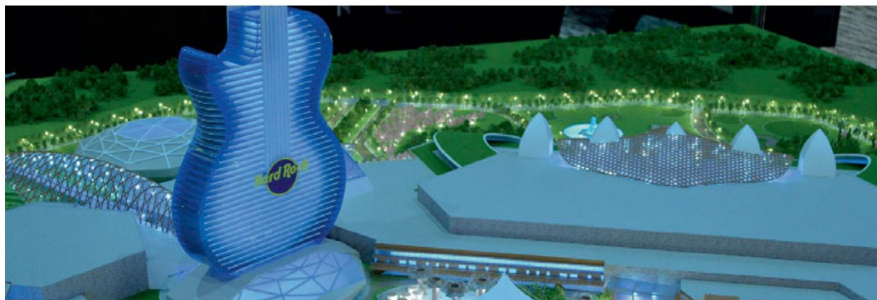
Chairman Jim Allen presented a building model of the proposed resort, which would offer over 1,500 rooms and a host of entertainment attractions.

The Seminole-owned resort, casino and restaurant operator has been aggressive in its pursuit of an IR licence in Hokkaido. Last November, it became a top partner of the J1 Football League team Hokkaido Consadole Sapporo. This was soon followed by an official

sponsorship of an ice sculpture exhibit at the popular Sapporo Snow Festival.

While it seems the Hokkaido IR licence race is in full swing, a heavy cloud hangs over proceedings in the form of the gubernatorial elections this April. Current governor Harumi Takahashi's successor will hold the key as to whether or not the northernmost prefecture of Japan will be one of the first IR licence locations.

Source: Asia Gaming Brief



Circa
RESORT & CASINO

Downtown Vegas casino plans revealed

DEREK Stevens has unveiled the first new casino resort to be built in downtown Las Vegas in decades.

Circa Resort and Casino will open in December 2020 in the space formerly occupied by the Las Vegas Club where Fremont Street meets Main Street.

It will have 777 hotel rooms, a two-storey casino, a range of restaurants, a spa and the longest outdoor bar on Fremont Street, as well as a state-of-the-art parking structure and "transportation hub," a rooftop pool amphitheatre and a multi-level, stadium-style sportsbook.

Stevens said that Circa was conceived and designed as a new attraction inspired by "a grand tradition of Las Vegas-style excitement."

Sands

LAS VEGAS SANDS CORP.

Sands pushing for casinos in New York and Rio

LAS Vegas Sands is pushing for casinos in New York City and Rio de Janeiro, according to reports.

LVS has hired New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's former operations chief, Howard Glaser, as a consultant. He has already set up meetings between LVS officials and New York business leaders, Politico reported.

The company also brought on Kivvit, a lobbying firm with more of Cuomo's former employees. Licences in New York City area can't be issued until 2023, but MGM Resorts is working to shorten that timeline. MGM is buying Empire City slots casino in Yonkers, which would be an applicant for a full casino.

In Brazil, LVS is willing to invest \$10bn into a Rio casino and the city's mayor is asking President-Elect Jair Bolsonaro to allow it, local outlet Valor reported. Mayor Marcello Crivella met with CEO Sheldon Adelson, who told Crivella the casino would double tourism and create 50,000 jobs. Crivella said he'd like Bolsonaro to allow three or four of these casinos throughout Brazil.

Source: Fantini's Gaming Report

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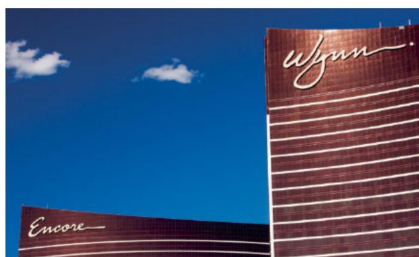
Wynn rings the changes

WYNN Resorts has announced several changes to its senior executive team, including the return of experienced resort executive Marilyn Spiegel as the president of Wynn Las Vegas.

Spiegel previously served as president of the Las Vegas resort from 2010 to 2013. She will replace Maurice Wooden, who has elected to step down as the resort's president at the end of the year.

"I am very pleased that Marilyn will return to lead the team at Wynn Las Vegas and Encore," said Wynn Resorts CEO Matt Maddox. "Our company's legendary service and guest experiences call for someone who truly understands our brand and appreciates what it means to our guests and employees."

In addition, the company has appointed Scott Moore as chief marketing officer. Moore comes to the company with extensive



experience in digital marketing, omni-channel consumer engagement, brand development and accelerating growth.

Also, Michael Weaver has been appointed chief communications officer. Weaver has been with Wynn Resorts since 2011, having served in various leadership positions in marketing, branding, communications and development.

Penn National casino acquisition complete



THE completion of the purchase of Margaritaville Resort Casino in Bossier City, Louisiana, US, has been announced by Penn National Gaming, the major US operator.

The deal is worth \$115m. At the same time Penn National entered into a triple net lease agreement with VICI Properties for the Margaritaville venue. There will be an annual rent of \$23m over 15 years with renewal options.

The Margaritaville location was built in 2013 and has 26,500sq.ft of casino space, 395 rooms, six restaurants and food and beverage outlets. Penn operates 41 locations in 18 jurisdictions and has over 50,000 gaming machines and 1,250 tables.

Golden acquires two Nevada resorts

GOLDEN Entertainment has completed its acquisition of Colorado Belle Gaming and Edgewater Gaming from Marnell Gaming in a cash and stock transaction.

The acquisition adds two casino resorts adjacent to Golden's Aquarius Casino Resort in Laughlin, Nevada, US. Golden Entertainment now owns 10 casino resorts - nine in southern Nevada and one in Maryland. In addition, Golden also operates video gaming devices at nearly 1,000 locations throughout Nevada and Montana, including its wholly-owned Nevada taverns.

Blake L Sartini, chairman and CEO of Golden Entertainment, commented: "The acquisition of these properties complements our market-leading Aquarius Casino Resort in Laughlin and grows our portfolio of wholly-owned southern Nevada casino resorts. Golden is excited to integrate the Colorado Belle and the Edgewater and we welcome their guests and team



members to the Golden family."

The purchase consideration consisted of \$155m cash and approximately 911,000 shares of Golden Entertainment common stock. Golden paid the cash portion of the purchase price using \$10m of cash on hand and \$145m from its existing revolving credit facility.

Prior to the closing, Golden purchased approximately 1.2 million Golden shares in the open market at an average price of \$16.06 under Golden's stock repurchase authorisation.



£2m makeover for London casino

FOLLOWING a £2m makeover, one of London's most prestigious casinos, Mayfair's Palm Beach, is back and better than ever.

In addition to the gaming floor there is a destination restaurant, relaxed grill, cocktail bar and regular music. Stylish and modern with a touch of old school glamour, Palm Beach has one of the largest gaming floors in the capital.

The only casino in the area where membership is not necessary, it is also the only Mayfair casino to offer learn-to-play poker lessons to beginners.

Nevada Gold completes casino sale

NEVADA Gold and Casinos has completed the sale of its Club Fortune Casino at Henderson in the US state of Nevada to Truckee Gaming for \$14.65m.

Nevada Gold and Casinos operates across several US states, including Washington, South Dakota and Nevada. The Club Fortune Casino has 540 slots, seven table games and a poker room.



Legend buys Cambodia company

MACAU Legend is buying a company that owns land in Cambodia that could eventually house an integrated resort.

In a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange the company, an operator of casinos in Macau and Laos, did not mention gaming in relation to the Siem Reap resort.

A Cambodian government official had been quoted last year saying gambling was "not allowed" in Siem Reap, home to the country's UNESCO World Heritage site Angkor Wat.



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Macau Legend Development Ltd

IGT and Hill in Twin River betting deal

IGT Global Solutions Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of International Game Technology, and William Hill US have introduced sports betting to Twin River Casino Hotel's all-new Sportsbook Bar and Grill.

The new Rhode Island venue features more than 100 HD televisions showing live sporting events and dynamic betting lines. Fans can wager on an expansive selection of pre-game and in-play bets for professional and college sports. The expansion to the new venue represents a continuation of the successful partnership between IGT and William Hill to provide sports betting to the Rhode Island Lottery. IGT provides PlayShot, an end-to-end sports betting platform with touchpoints



through which bets are placed and settled.

William Hill provides odds making services and risk management. IGT and William Hill also provide sports betting at Tiverton Casino Hotel, which began accepting bets on December 3. Twin River Casino Hotel started accepting bets from a temporary space on November 26 prior to the opening of the Sportsbook Bar and Grill.

33 casinos planned for Elysium City

SPAIN'S latest would-be integrated resort developer wants to open 33 casinos.

Last month, US-based company Cora Alpha announced its intention to build a \$3.5bn integrated resort known as Elysium City in Spain's autonomous region of Extremadura. The company has submitted its planning documents along with the required €10m submission fee.

When Cora Alpha first announced the project, the plan called for a master casino licence that allowed the developer to open four casino gaming rooms across the resort. It noted at the time that it could seek authorisation for up to 20 rooms, but has now decided that this is insufficient and has upped the number of desired gaming rooms to 33.

A Cora Alpha spokesperson claimed that the company wasn't interested in creating a new Las Vegas in Extremadura, but was simply making the request as "a matter of bureaucratic efficiency" in that it's better to have the authority to open new gaming rooms as the need arises without having to go back to the authorities.



Another Cyprus satellite

CYPRUS Casinos last month opened a third casino, described as a satellite to the eventual main resort, in Cyprus.

Cyprus Casinos Larnaca (C2 Larnaca) is located at the Larnaca International Airport, near the port city of Larnaca on the south coast of Cyprus.

C2 Larnaca has facilities in two different areas of the airport terminal, according to a company press release, offering 42 slot machines. The first location in the departures area is accessible only to airside passengers, while the second in the arrivals area is accessible to the general public.



Zanella new president at CityCenter



STEVE Zanella is taking over as president and COO at CityCenter, the 16.7sq.ft mixed use complex on the Las Vegas Strip that is connected to the Bellagio resort via a people mover.

CityCenter has condominiums and hotels, plus a shopping mall and the Aria Casino, together constituting the largest privately financed development in the US. It was jointly developed by MGM and Dubai World in 2009 and cost over \$9bn.

Zanella will oversee daily operations of the Aria and of the Vdara Hotel and Spa. He has over

25 years' experience with MGM, most recently serving as president of Core Properties in Las Vegas, overseeing operations at Park MGM, New York-New York Hotel and Casino, Luxor Hotel and Casino, Excalibur Hotel and Casino and Circus Circus.

He began his career with MGM as management associate in 1991, moving through finance, marketing and gaming leadership positions. He has also served as president and COO at MGM Grand Detroit and vice president of slots at Beau Rivage in Mississippi.

Uncontaminated bill of health for Cosmopol

AFTER a clash with the Swedish Lottery Inspectorate over alleged shortcomings in its anti-money laundering procedures, Casino Cosmopol has moved to obtain an ECA Responsible Gambling standard.

The certification came after an independent audit conducted by the Global Gambling Guidance Group that showed the state-owned company acting in line with the latest standards of responsible gambling for licensed land-based casinos.

Casino Cosmopol now joins some major operating names in certification according to the 2018 Responsible Gambling Framework, including Spielbanken Baden-Württemberg in Germany and Casinos Austria.

Ynze Remmers, lead auditor for G4, said: "The audit showed the strong involvement of all employees of Casino Cosmopol in the responsible gambling programme that is exemplary and an important aspect of taking the issue seriously."

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Harrah's partners sports teams

A BIG partnership in US sports and land-based gaming has emerged with the partnership between three New Orleans brands - the Saints American football team, the Pelicans basketball team and gaming giant Harrah's.

Both teams will feature in Harrah's entertainment and gaming presentation with their own branded area on the casino floor that will be designated as an official post-game destination.

The Harrah's downtown location on Canal Street in New Orleans has been a popular destination for visitors for nearly 20 years. The Caesar's Group, of which Harrah's is a subsidiary, has also forged partnerships with the Las Vegas Raiders, the Baltimore Ravens, the Philadelphia 76ers of the NBA and the New Jersey Devils of the NHL.

Harrah's New Orleans is the only land-based casino in the centre of the city and has 115,000sq.ft of gaming, including more than 1,500 slots, 125 table games and 20 tables in its dedicated poker room.



Harrah's New Orleans

Caesars named Official Casino Sponsor for NFL

IN the first-ever national casino sponsorship deal for the US' National Football League, Caesars Entertainment has been named Official Casino Sponsor.

The arrangement will begin with the forthcoming 2019 NFL playoffs. It is a multi-year deal in which Caesars will provide unique experiences for NFL fans by using its casino properties. They will range from celebrity chefs to premier music artists and a wide range of other entertainments.

In return, Caesars has the right to use NFL trademarks in the US as well as in the UK to promote its properties and to market its image at major NFL events, including the Super Bowl and the NFL Draft.

Said Mark Frissora, president and CEO of Caesars Entertainment: "Combining the



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league's 180 million fans with our 55 million Total Rewards loyalty programme members will expose millions of people to the exclusive and year-round opportunities at our properties."

Seven NFL clubs have relationships with Caesars, including the Falcons, Ravens, Bears, Colts, Saints, Raiders and Eagles. Those partnerships, along with the new league deal, are for the casino category only and do not include sports betting, daily fantasy or hotels/resorts.

Gilbane chosen to build Philadelphia casino

LIVE! Casino and Hotel Philadelphia in the US has selected Gilbane Building as general



contractor for its \$700m development.

"Gilbane was a natural fit for this project because the team is so experienced in the hospitality industry and they bring a real understanding of our vision," Joe Weinberg, managing partner of The Cordish Cos, said in a statement.

Gilbane will build the 1.5 million square feet sports, entertainment and casino resort, which will feature a boutique hotel with more than 200 rooms, dining and live entertainment venues and a 2,700-space parking garage. Gilbane will first demolish an existing Holiday Inn and other buildings occupying the site of the future development.

Casino operator staff raise £121,000

MEMBERS of staff from leading casino operator Genting Casino UK have raised more than £121,000



through various running fundraising initiatives over the course of a four-year partnership with the CHIPS Charity.

The CHIPS Charity was founded on behalf of the UK gaming industry in 2001 in order to raise funds to purchase specialised wheelchairs for young people living in the UK with varying disabilities.

The wheelchairs purchased by the charity are donated to children who would otherwise have no way of getting around on their own. Genting Casino UK has had a relationship with the charity since it was founded and since 2015 a team of Genting UK staff have raised an incredible £121,000 for the charity.

To raise vital funds for the charity, members of staff from the casino operator have pushed themselves to the limit by taking part in running events at home and abroad over the course of the last four years.

In 2015, £18,000 was raised by the team at the Royal Parks Half Marathon in London and, in 2016, a sum of £33,000 was raised at the Rock n Roll Las Vegas Marathon and Half Marathon.

In 2017, Genting UK staff travelled to Spain for the Rock n Roll Madrid Marathon and Half Marathon, raising a total of £20,000. They then returned to America for the Rock n Roll San Diego Marathon and Half Marathon where the team raised a staggering £50,000.

Corona Casino opens in Vietnam

THE Corona Casino in Phu Quoc island opened for business last month, becoming the first in Vietnam to admit locals on to the floor under a three-year pilot scheme.

The casino is being managed by Netherlands-based Upfinity Gaming Management, which signed an exclusive management accord in May 2017.

The casino forms part of the Corona Integrated Resort, which includes a Radisson Blue hotel, a Vin Oasis hotel, a Safari and Amusement park, convention centre, theatre and shopping experience.

The casino was designed by Steelman Partners and consists of 18,800sq.m of gaming space with 100 tables and 1,000 electronic gaming machines, three restaurants, two specialty bars and lounges.

The opening and pre-opening was managed by Peter Keijzer, former general manager of Holland Casino in Amsterdam, the biggest in the Netherlands.